

103
**H.R. 3975, THE DEPARTMENT OF
DEFENSE OVERSEAS EDUCATORS ACT**

Y 4. P 84/10:103-39

RING

H.R. 3975, The Department of Defense... RE THE

**SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE CIVIL SERVICE
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON
POST OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED THIRD CONGRESS**

SECOND SESSION

MARCH 24, 1994

Serial No. 103-39

Printed for the use of the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service

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H.R. 3975, THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE OVERSEAS EDUCATORS ACT

THURSDAY, MARCH 24, 1994

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON CIVIL SERVICE,
COMMITTEE ON POST OFFICE AND CIVIL SERVICE,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittees met, pursuant to call, at 10 a.m. in room 311, Cannon House Office Building, Hon. Frank McCloskey (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Members present: Representatives McCloskey, Morella, Kanjorski, and Burton.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Good morning. We'll proceed with the hearing. I appreciate everyone coming out today. Good to see you, Mrs. Morella. We've seen a lot of each other lately.

The Department of Defense Dependent Schools, DODDS System, is one of the largest U.S. school systems with approximately 13,000 employees and 150,000 students worldwide. Because of the global nature of the school system, serious inequities exist in the treatment of its teachers. I've introduced H.R. 3975, the Department of Defense Overseas Educators Act, to address some of these inequities and improve the quality of life for DODDS teachers around the world.

DODDS teachers are hired on a two-tier system. Teachers hired abroad are subject to different benefits and rights than those hired in the United States. Teachers hired abroad are not entitled to benefits such as housing, relocation expenses and trips back to the United States every 2 years, benefits that U.S. hired teachers receive. For some teachers hired abroad, this difference in benefits makes sense, but it creates problems for others. For example, military spouses are often hired abroad and if their spouse is transferred, it is extremely difficult for them to continue teaching should they wish to finish out the year because of the loss of their spouse's housing allowance.

There also is a difference between recertification standards for DODDS teachers in the United States and abroad. DODDS teachers abroad are required to have 6 additional graduate hours, undergraduate hours are not allowed, every 6 years in subject areas identified by DODDS and require to be qualified in standards changed by DODDS each year; whereas teachers in the United States must have six hours of course work in any subject area to be recertified. The burden on DODDS teachers is to seek graduate hours in subject areas that may have only undergraduate hours

and to meet qualification standards that are changed annually without the opportunity to be trained overseas.

Additionally, DODDS teachers do not have access to federal leave transfer or leave-sharing programs to which other federal employees have access. Leave-sharing and transfer is a useful tool to help retain employees and improve morale which significantly improve the working conditions of DODDS teachers at virtually no cost.

Clearly there is a need for reform of the DODDS Program and H.R. 3975 seeks to guarantee a high caliber education for children of members of our Armed Services and other civilian workers abroad. This legislation will establish a leave-sharing or leave-transfer program for DODDS employees. It also would require that teachers hired overseas have the same access to benefits as teachers hired in the United States.

Finally, H.R. 3975 would improve the pay of DODDS teachers by no longer requiring a teacher's pay be based on the standard of U.S. urban schools in areas of populations of more than 100,000. Since this requirement was put in place, pay for urban teachers has deteriorated badly, while pay for suburban educators has increased and DODDS teachers have suffered from this trend. Under the bill, DODDS teachers' pay would be calculated on both urban and suburban teachers' pay. H.R. 3975 does not propose radical reform to the operations of overseas schools, it simply rectifies some of the inequities inherent in overseas DODDS schools. We must continue to attract and retain the best and the brightest teachers to work in our overseas schools. The children of members of our Armed Services and our civilian workers serving abroad deserve it. They're the future of this country and are as important as any child educated in the United States.

Again, I want to welcome everyone and recognize Mrs. Morella. Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, as a former educator, I feel a real empathy for the problems facing Department of Defense Dependent Schools, DODDS, overseas teachers. However, I'm gratified that DODDS have such a vast cadre of dedicated, qualified teachers. I think about 9,000? It's clear that the experience of teaching abroad is as, or more, rewarding to the teachers as to the students that they teach.

When you think about it, the teachers are there because they want to be, even though their pupils may not have wanted to leave their comfortable stateside abode. Of course, the teacher's family may be in the same position as a military family in terms of wanting to be in a particular remote area of the world. I can well imagine that being stuck in a hardship classified country for more than two years could be extremely frustrating and demoralizing.

Indeed, there must be a delicate balancing act to keep in mind the needs of a downsized military, with funding and hiring restraints and the needs of teachers who have provided quality education for military families.

Your bill, Mr. Chairman, addresses some fundamental issues for DODDS: reemployment of displaced teachers, teacher recruitment, compensation, leave transfers, recertification, and health benefits. These are basic issues when we look for improvements in working conditions, recruitment and retention of Federal employees.

I am sure that there will be a need for open dialogue to fashion a comprehensive bill that will satisfy the requirements of all parties. The testimony which will be presented today certainly indicates that unanimity is not present among the witnesses. I welcome all the witnesses, some of whom seem to have come from many miles away, and I look forward to their testimony and will probably have some questions for them.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Thank you very much, Mrs. Morella.

Our first witness is, starting right from the top of this list, Dr. John Stremple, Director of the DODDS schools, Department of Defense Dependent Schools.

Good morning, Dr. Stremple. If you want to introduce your colleagues, we will proceed.

STATEMENT OF DR. JOHN STREMPLE, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE DEPENDENT SCHOOLS, ACCOMPANIED BY ED TURNER, CHIEF OF STAFF OF PERSONNEL, AND LYLE VENABLE, CHIEF OF COMPENSATION

Dr. STREMPLE. On my right is Mr. Ed Turner, who is in charge of staffing, chief of staffing in our personnel operation; and on my left is Mr. Lyle Venable, who is chief of compensation in our personnel operation.

I have a statement to read for the record, if I may, sir.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. We'll accept your statement for the record.

I'm sorry, Mrs. Morella?

Mrs. MORELLA. I was just going to suggest, Doctor Stremple, would you move the microphone closer?

Dr. STREMPLE. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Accept your statement for the record, doctor, and you proceed as you like.

Dr. STREMPLE. All right. We have a written statement to submit to the record and I'll read an oral statement.

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I'm John Stremple, Director of the Department of Defense Education activity. I'm pleased to appear before you today to discuss a bill proposing changes in the employment practices for Department of Defense Dependent School teachers, DODDS.

The Defense Department's education system includes both DOD dependent schools and the stateside section 6 schools. We're concerned today with the approximately 13,000 DODDS teachers, specialists and education aides employed in 208 schools and one junior college in 18 countries. The Department of Defense education activity is strongly committed to educational excellence in its schools for the children of military and civilian personnel. The principal reason for our success is the quality of our work force. We continue that commitment to quality even as we are addressing the challenge of the transition overseas. The Congress and the administration have recognized the demands of transition and have provided the support required to meet them.

The bill introduced on March 8, 1994 would impact upon several employment issues currently administered under the aegis of the Department of Defense Overseas Teachers Pay and Personnel Prac-

tices Act. As I reviewed the bill, your obvious concern for the welfare of our teachers was very much appreciated. I understand your concerns and support a part of the bill's objectives. However, I believe that the proposal should be considered in light of the very effective support services available through existing programs.

Moreover, I suggest that any proposal to provide additional overseas benefits must be considered in terms of federal employees as a whole.

With your permission, I'll briefly discuss several sections of the bill.

I understand that this bill is intended to facilitate the reemployment of DODDS teachers who are involuntarily separated during the period of transition currently occurring overseas. Two of the proposed changes relate to the transition.

One, until October 1997, section 2 of the bill would give 1 year's priority placement consideration to DODDS teachers for vacant positions in any Government agency. This benefit would be provided to any teacher, including substitutes, paraprofessionals, teachers aides, and retired military serving as JROTC instructors, who have received specific notices of reduction in force or who have been involuntarily separated due to reduction in force. This provision would place teachers in a more advantageous status for most Governmentwide vacancies and in priority over other nonteacher applicants similarly situated. We believe this proposal to be inconsistent with the intent of excepted service employment.

We further believe that existing placement and transfer programs administered within DODDS and DOD provide reasonable assistance to all excess staff, including noneducators. The effect of this has been that we've been able to avoid reduction in force in the past and expect to do so in the future. In this regard, we're taking full advantage of the early retirement incentives provided through the use of voluntary separation incentive program, the voluntary early retirement authority program, and discontinued service retirement program. For these reasons, we oppose these proposals.

We fully support the continuation of health benefits coverage under the provisions of Public Law 102-484 for all DOD employees. The features of this program permit a separated DOD employee to continue health benefits coverage without an increase in cost. However, we believe that DODDS teachers are currently eligible for the full benefit under the current law. Thus, we do not believe that section 5 of the bill is needed to separately secure the benefits for DODDS teachers.

The bill's remaining five proposals appear to be unrelated to the transition. These include proposals to provide overseas benefits to which certain DODDS teachers otherwise would not be entitled; to change the statutory definition of DODDS teaching positions to include, for the first time, specific occupational categories; to increase the number of school jurisdictions annually surveyed and to determine the salaries of DODDS teachers; to lessen professional recertification standards; and to establish a leave-sharing program for DODDS teachers.

First, section 3 of the bill appears to provide additional overseas employment benefits normally limited to Federal employees, in-

cluding teachers, recruited from the United States, to teachers hired overseas who have more than 1 year of service overseas. These benefits would include rent-free Government quarters or a housing allowance, payment of any applicable foreign post differential, and full transportation entitlements. Transportation benefits would include renewal and relocation travel of the employee and the employee's family, as well as the shipment and storage of household goods and motor vehicles. This proposal could also make it very difficult for our ability to recruit teachers for schools in hardship areas.

A condition of employment for teachers recruited from the United States is acceptance of an assignment at any location. Rather than apply from the United States for system-wide placement, applicants would instead be able to travel to a more desirable overseas location and, if appointed locally, become eligible for full overseas benefits after only 1 year. We do not support the provision of these added benefits for DODDS teachers.

Second, section 3 also would add specific occupational categories of positions, such as paraprofessional and education aides, under the act's broad definition of teaching positions. Under the current act, whether certain occupational categories are brought under the coverage of the act has been a matter of the Secretary's discretion. This proposal would remove the current discretionary authority. It would also require annual salary surveys of the range of salary rates related for these added occupations. We do not recommend passage.

Third, section 4 of the bill would significantly increase the annual survey efforts required to determine the pay of teaching positions. Each year the Department of Defense, through its wage-fixing authority, surveys nearly 200 urban school jurisdictions of 100,000 or more population to determine the average range of salaries to be paid to DODDS teachers. This section would delete the reference to urban school jurisdictions and require the authority to survey a far greater number of school jurisdictions. A conservative estimate would be between 600 and 700 school jurisdictions.

For example, the authority now annually surveys two urban school jurisdictions in the National Capital Area, the District of Columbia and Alexandria, VA, city schools. It would be required to expand its survey to include at least Arlington, Fairfax, Prince Georges, and Montgomery County schools, among others. We do not know what the impact, if any, would be on teacher pay. It is clear, however, that the cost and difficulty of expanded data collection and analysis imposed by this provision of the bill would be excessive.

Fourth, section 4 would dilute the qualification standards adopted by DODDS for recertification of its educators. It would do so by mandating acceptance of any college credit in virtually any discipline or subject area taught in DODDS. As an example, a special education teacher could be recertified by obtaining 6 semester hours in military science. It could be argued that any training has value. However, the high quality educational standards of the DODDS system requires continual professional growth and relevant training for its professional staff. Recertification implies a focus on being well-qualified to teach or provide service in a par-

ticular area. Provisions of the bill would dilute our emphasis on having a teacher develop expertise in one's field. Our requirements include maintaining the qualifications set for recruitment of a new teacher or specialist, as well as for the changing requirements of the profession or law. The current certification criteria is minimal. We believe that DODDS must retain the ability to adapt its recertification qualification standards and for this reason must oppose any concept that would diminish our ability to do so.

Fifth, section 4 of the bill would also establish voluntary leave transfer and bank programs similar to the annual leave sharing programs authorized for employees appointed to title 5 general schedule and wage grade positions. However, educators do not earn annual leave. Their leave is equivalent to sick leave for most of the employment purposes, including available retirement, accrual, and crediting upon movement between employment systems. We cannot support a leave bank or transfer program which is based on sick leave rather than annual leave.

I thank you for the opportunity to respond on the issues and would be pleased to answer any questions the Committee may have.

[The prepared statement of Dr. Stremple follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DR. JOHN STREMPLE, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DEPENDENT SCHOOLS

Good morning, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. I am John Stremple, Director of the Department of Defense Education Activity. I am pleased to appear before you today to discuss H.R. 3975, a bill proposing changes in the employment practices for Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DODDS) Teachers.

The Defense Dependents' Education System includes both DOD Dependents Schools (DODDS) and the stateside section 6 schools. We are concerned today with the approximately 13,000 DODDS teachers, specialists, and education aides employed in 208 schools and one junior college in 18 countries. The Department of Defense education activity is strongly committed to educational excellence in its schools for the children of military and civilian personnel. The principal reason for our success is the quality of our work force. We continue that commitment to quality, even as we are addressing the challenge of the transition overseas. The Congress and the administration have recognized the demands of transition and have provided the support required to meet them.

The Bill introduced on March 8, 1994, would impact upon several employment programs currently administered under the aegis of chapter 25, title 20, of the United States Code, referred to as the Defense Department Overseas Teachers Pay and Personnel Practices Act, as amended (the ACT). As I reviewed the bill, your concern for the welfare of our teachers was obvious to me. I understand your concerns and support a part of the objectives of the bill. However, I also believe that these proposals need to be considered in light of the highly effective support services available through existing programs. Moreover, I suggest that any proposal involving additional overseas employment benefits must be considered in terms of the Federal Work Force as a whole. With your permission, I will proceed with a discussion of each section of the bill.

I understand that this bill is intended to facilitate the reemployment of DODDS teachers who are involuntarily separated during the period of transition currently occurring overseas. Two of the proposed changes submitted through this bill directly relate to the transition:

1. Until October 1997, section 2 of the bill would give one year's priority placement consideration to DODDS teachers for vacant positions in any Government Agency. This benefit would be provided any DODDS teacher, including substitutes, paraprofessionals, teacher aides, and retired military serving as Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) instructors (as would be redefined by section 3(b) of the bill), who has received specific notice of reduction in force, or who has been involuntarily separated due to reduction in force. DODDS teachers are appointed to excepted service positions overseas and, therefore, are not eligible for priority place-

ment consideration in the competitive service. Thus, there would be no practical reason for adopting this provision of the bill. We believe this proposal to be inconsistent with the intent of excepted service employment. We also believe that existing priority placement and transfer programs administered within the Department of Defense (DOD) and DODDS currently provide reasonable placement assistance for excess employees. In this same vein, we are taking full advantage of the retirement incentives provided through the use of the voluntary separation incentive program, the voluntary early retirement authority program, and the discontinued service retirement program. To date, DODDS has rarely separated teachers under reduction in force, nor do we expect to do so. Our experience and the Department's commitment to providing reasonable placement assistance to all affected employees simply does not suggest a need to me for establishing the additional placement procedure proposed by the bill. Thus, we do not support this transitional provision.

2. We fully support the continuation of health benefits coverage under the provisions of Public Law 102-484 for all DOD employees. The features of this program permit a separated DOD employee to continue health benefits coverage without an increase in the cost. However, we believe that DODDS teachers are currently eligible under the provisions of the Public Law. For this reason, we do not believe that section 5 of the bill is needed to establish identical benefits for DODDS teachers.

The remaining proposals of the bill appear to be unrelated to the transition. These include the proposals to provide overseas benefits to which certain DODDS teachers otherwise would not be entitled; to change the statutory definition of a DODDS teaching position to include, for the first time, references to specific occupational categories; to increase the number of school jurisdictions annually surveyed to determine the salaries of teachers; to lessen professional recertification standards; and, to establish a leave-sharing program for DODDS teachers.

1. Section 3 of the bill appears to provide additional overseas employment benefits, normally limited to Federal employees (including teachers) recruited from the United States, to teachers (as would be redefined by the bill) hired overseas who have more than one year's service overseas. These benefits would include rent-free Government quarters or a housing allowance, payment of any applicable foreign post differential, and full transportation entitlements. Transportation benefits would include renewal and relocation travel of the employee and the employee's family, as well as shipment and storage of household goods and motor vehicles. Thus, at a time of downsizing the military and civilian force within the Department and a reduction in the number of dependent children served and schools operated, the per capita employee costs would rise significantly. The inclusion of additional categories of employees under the definition of a teaching position in section 3 of the bill could further increase the cost of this proposal. Adding such benefits for the current work force, however, would involve significant, unprogrammed costs. To fund these benefits, further work force reductions could become necessary that might seriously impair our ability to accomplish the mission. It is also significant that this proposal could defeat our capability to recruit teachers for hardship areas. A condition of employment for teachers recruited from the United States is acceptance of an assignment in a school at any overseas location. Rather than apply for system-wide placement, applicants would only need to travel to the more desirable locations overseas. If appointed locally, the local-hire applicant would become eligible for the overseas benefits after only one year. DODDS is only one employer within the Department of Defense and the Federal Government. As such, the provision of these benefits could not be granted to DODDS teachers, unless granted to all DOD employees, and the Department could not afford to do so. For these reasons, we do not support this provision of the bill.

2. As previously indicated, section 3 also would add specific categories of positions, such as paraprofessional and education aides, under the act's definition of a teaching position. Under the current act, whether such categories are brought under its coverage has been a matter of the Secretary's discretion. The proposal would remove the current discretionary authority. It would also increase the number of occupations that would need to be surveyed and analyzed annually for pay determination purposes, as discussed in more detail in the review of section 4 of the bill that follows. We do not recommend their passage.

3. Section 4 of the bill would significantly increase the annual survey effort required to determine the pay of teaching positions. Each year, the Department of Defense, through its wage fixing authority, surveys large urban school jurisdictions of 100,000 or more population to determine the average of the range of salary rates to be paid to DODDS teachers. According to the most recent census, the authority annually collects and analyzes data from nearly 200 urban school jurisdictions to satisfy this requirement. Section 4 of the bill would delete the reference to "urban" school jurisdictions and require the authority to survey a far greater number of

school jurisdictions. A conservative estimate would be between 600 and 700 school jurisdictions. As one example, the authority now annually surveys 2 urban school jurisdictions in the National Capital area, the District of Columbia, and Alexandria, Virginia, city schools. It would be required under the proposal to expand its survey to include Arlington, Fairfax, Prince Georges and Montgomery County Schools, among others. We do not know what the impact, if any, would be on teacher pay and practices. It is clear, however, that the cost and difficulty of expanded data collection and analysis required by this provision and the redefinition of a teaching position would be excessive.

4. Section 4 would dilute the qualifications standards adopted by DODDS for recertification of its educators. It would do so by mandating acceptance of any college credit, in virtually any discipline or subject area taught by DODDS. As an example, a special education teacher could be recertified by obtaining 6 undergraduate semester hours in military science. It could be argued that any training has value. However, the high quality educational standard of the DODDS system requires continual professional growth and relevant training for its professional staff. Recertification implies a focus on being well qualified to teach or provide specialized services in a particular area. The provisions of this subsection of the bill would dilute our emphasis on having a teacher develop expertise in one's field. Our requirements include maintaining the qualifications set for recruitment of a new teacher or specialist, as well as for the changing requirements of the profession or law. The current certification is minimal and we believe that DODDS must retain the ability to adapt its recertification qualification standards and must oppose any concept that would diminish our ability to do so.

5. Section 4 of the bill would also establish voluntary leave transfer and bank programs similar to the discretionary annual leave sharing programs authorized for employees appointed to title 5 General Schedule and Wage Grade positions. However, we would note that teachers employed under the act do not earn annual leave or an equivalent thereof. Thus, a DODDS educator's leave transfer program would differ fundamentally from its title 5 counterpart. The DODDS educator's leave authorized under title 20 is equivalent to the sick leave earned by title 5 employees and may be credited for additional service upon an educator's retirement. Under a 1984 amendment to the act, educator's leave is no longer subject to a maximum leave accumulation ceiling. Unused educator's leave may not be liquidated upon separation, although it typically may be credited as available sick leave upon the movement of a title 20 educator to a title 5 position. Thus, a leave transfer program established under the act would be based upon a leave program which is identical in all significant aspects to sick, rather than annual, leave. We cannot support a leave bank or leave transfer program which is based on sick rather than annual leave.

I thank you for the opportunity to respond to these proposals and would be pleased to answer any questions the committee may have.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Stremple. I really appreciate you being here. We're not going to be able to comprehensively handle all the issues that we're dealing with today. We may be sending you some written questions. I will begin with some key points.

What provisions or aspects of this bill would you favor or endorse?

Dr. STREMPLE. Well, the one section on health benefits, the continuation of health benefits, we do endorse, but the rest we oppose.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. OK. Now, what is DODD's problem with leave transfer on sick leave and is there any specific reason why it's OK for the Federal service to transfer leave, but not for DODDS teachers?

Dr. STREMPLE. Our OMB people felt that since DODDS teachers really accrue sick leave and not annual leave, that it's not appropriate to have a leave transfer or a leave bank under these circumstances.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Now, I think our witnesses later, and part of the underlying thesis of this legislation is that there's income disparity between DODDS teachers and the average teacher right now in the United States, with the pay formulas for suburban and

urban. Do you have any comment on that? Some of the materials provided to us seem to imply there's a \$10,000 to \$15,000 average disparity in some cases.

Dr. STREMPLE. I don't know what the impact of such a survey would bring to us, sir. I was a practicing superintendent for a number of years in California for two major school districts and I can say this about salaries generally, that while my belief is that the salaries are close to average in the United States, there are other benefits. For example, LQA and the fact that we pay full housing overseas. In most instances it is full housing and transportation allowances and the transfer of goods and this kind of thing. Our average cost per teacher now runs around \$58,000. Our salary ranges run from \$24,500 to \$48,500. In my experience, that's not dissimilar in terms of average practice, although it would take a survey under current conditions to really—but our cost per teacher or cost per employee overseas is significant.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. I'm sure it is to have professionals placed overseas. This questions what is fair and how is it comparable to similarly placed people.

Dr. STREMPLE. Let me say this about what I just said. I do not think teachers are well paid, that's my personal view, in America or anywhere for that matter. They are not well paid and are deserving much, much more.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. How about the question of benefits for people hired overseas, vis-a-vis hired in the States? In particular, the example of the military wife who wants to serve out the semester, obviously, to the benefit of the children and her classes until she can rejoin her spouse at some later date. What's the matter with relocation benefits? In some particular cases, I guess, such as Mrs. McGee in Panama as far as housing—

Dr. STREMPLE. I don't know her specific situation, but I believe, and you fellows can help me here, I believe, sir, that if a military member is transferred and the spouse stays, they pick up the LQA. They continue to—they can retain it if the family is separated. If the military person retires and comes back, they lose it. But if a military person is separated for duty purposes, the LQA is retained.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. How about the relocation costs in the event that the spouse stays to serve out the semester or the year?

Mr. TURNER. Perhaps I can address that for you. Typically in a situation like that, and of course there are several different sets of criteria, but typically if a sponsor, if the spouse leaves the area and has authorized the movement of their family and the individual stays there and is separated, then they would be eligible to move in what's called a delay transportation of the dependents in the family. It would be the same thing as a teacher who is selected in the United States and who is overseas. They can have delayed departure of their family. This is, of course, in general. It would be specific. But generally speaking, they can still travel under the orders of the sponsor that departed the area if they were the one who had the benefits in the first place.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. So, are you in essence saying that there's no loss in this regard then, that they are covered on relocation when they stay?

Mr. TURNER. If the spouse who departed the area was under orders, and typically that would be—the first rule would be that the spouse of the individual who had the benefits was employed and the sponsor departs the area. Then they can pick up a living quarters allowance authorization while they're there. Then, when the timeframe was over with and they choose to follow the spouse, generally speaking then they would be able to be transported under the sponsor's orders in the first place. They would not pick up on their own rights, but they would still have the right to be transported under the original sponsor's orders and authorization.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Mr. Stremple, do you have a labor-management partnership council? How do you work out differences within the system?

Dr. STREMPLE. With the association, the teachers association? We have a classical collective bargaining operation where we negotiate with our teachers association.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Are you going to implement any sort of labor-management partnership council under the national performance review?

Dr. STREMPLE. Yes, sir, we are. We fully intend to. We've already had a preliminary discussion with the president of the association and with his directors. I favor that kind of a—and have practiced in previous years that kind of an operation and we will graciously involve ourselves in that kind of activity.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. I'll have additional questions shortly, but I'd like to recognize Mrs. Morella.

Mrs. MORELLA. Thank you. You've asked a number of the questions that I had thought about too, Mr. Chairman.

But I'm wondering, Dr. Stremple, as I have been perusing also the testimony to be presented by those who are going to succeed you, you've had a long tenure with DODDS. Have you been hearing the complaints that we are going to hear from the other witnesses and how seriously have you treated the issues that they will be presenting to us as complaints? First of all, have you heard any of the complaints and to what degree?

Dr. STREMPLE. Well, I have on the question of equity with the people.

Mrs. MORELLA. Local hires?

Dr. STREMPLE. Well, local hires overseas, yes, that has been a serious issue. I have to speak candidly. I think there is an inequity there. I think the Department is looking at it from the point of view of all employees, not just DODDS teachers and hiring practices and so. There is, I'd have to be candid about it, inequity. If we pick up that cost, it is a significant one. I think there's in the neighborhood of 800 people who would be—

Mrs. MORELLA. So, you are aware of that inequity, but you have not done anything to address it because you have a concern about what the cost would be?

Dr. STREMPLE. Well, the Department does.

Mrs. MORELLA. The Department does?

Dr. STREMPLE. Because it goes beyond teachers, obviously. You have to treat people similarly obviously and that's the issue. If it's something the Department might be willing to look further into, that's something that I would pursue.

Mrs. MORELLA. See, one of the things I was also driving at that Mr. McCloskey asked is are there some parts of this bill that you think address that inequity that you would say to this subcommittee, "We think this is a good section". You mentioned the health section, but what do you think would address it in terms of salary, benefits.

Dr. STREMPLE. Right. Well, as I indicated, there are a couple of areas where I personally and philosophically would pursue further investigation and look for initiative from the Department itself and this inequity issue in terms of LQA is one of them.

Mrs. MORELLA. You commented about section 3 of the bill and some of the provisions appear to be quite expensive. Do other DODDS employees, Federal civilian employees, get the same benefits? I think your answer is yes, right? You comment on it on page 6.

Dr. STREMPLE. That's the issue that I'm speaking to, provide additional overseas employment benefits normally limited to Federal employees recruited in the United States. That's the one you're talking about.

Mrs. MORELLA. But you are saying that there are other DODDS employees do get those benefits?

Dr. STREMPLE. Yes.

Mrs. MORELLA. OK. And then you also—

Dr. STREMPLE. Hired in the United States and DOD employees generally.

Mrs. MORELLA. At one point also you talked about or you mentioned the survey and you mentioned that you have surveyed the District of Columbia and Alexandria, VA, but you are not prone to expanding this survey to include, for instance, my jurisdiction of Montgomery County, which would bring Maryland into the picture, other than Virginia.

Dr. STREMPLE. Yes. We cite that as a—

Mrs. MORELLA. Why did you pick the District of Columbia and Alexandria and avoid an area where education is so important?

Dr. STREMPLE. Well, the current law requires that we survey urban school districts that have a population, total population of 100,000 or more.

Mrs. MORELLA. Right.

Dr. STREMPLE. My first reaction to the proposal was, "Well, heck, that's just a clerical matter of surveying and checking out other districts." But listening to people who do the work, as I understand it, people actually go into these systems and explain the format and the processes that are used in making these surveys. We would expand from 200. We think the 600 or 700 districts is minimum and that there would be significant costs there and require more people to be involved in this process. So, it is a cost issue.

Mrs. MORELLA. I haven't seen any kind of a fiscal note for this bill. Do you perhaps have something that you want to share with us in terms of any figures you think it would involve?

Dr. STREMPLE. We haven't costed it out. We could do that.

Mrs. MORELLA. I was just curious about it.

Dr. STREMPLE. That's one of the issues, frankly, that concerned us. We really don't know the impact, the total impact of the bill.

Mrs. MORELLA. Even though you see an inequity and possibly problems, I don't know, do you have problems recruiting or retaining?

Dr. STREMPLE. No, ma'am. There's no problem recruiting or retaining people.

Mrs. MORELLA. Sometimes when that happens we take things for granted and we become very lethargic enhancing morale and productivity, which in the end product of course is the teaching that goes on.

Dr. STREMPLE. Right. We have several thousand applicants every year. So, there isn't a problem recruiting. There are shortage areas just as you find in the United States occasionally, say in math and science or particularly in hiring minorities and this kind of thing. But on balance, there are a lot of applicants.

Mrs. MORELLA. You attempt to do that, you attempt to look to the minorities or those areas that are——

Dr. STREMPLE. Vigorously.

Mrs. MORELLA [continuing]. Under represented——

Dr. STREMPLE. Yes, ma'am.

Mrs. MORELLA [continuing]. And the expertise. What about recertification? Do you think the current DODDS recertification requirement is competent, adequate, needs improving?

Dr. STREMPLE. Yes, and it compares—I notice in the Congressman's statement that our—I'm speaking recklessly here. I read somewhere that in most school districts teachers are able to choose any subject and area and get salary advancement as a result of taking any course. That has not been my experience. We believe that teachers ought to take courses that have applicability to the act of teaching itself or to the particular discipline that they're assigned. So, we do some monitoring of that.

Mrs. MORELLA. What is required now for recertification, a certain number of credit hours in teaching?

Dr. STREMPLE. Yes, ma'am. It's 6 credits within 6 years.

Mrs. MORELLA. And how do you define their subject area?

Dr. STREMPLE. The teacher—and let me say this about that. Teachers are very professional and typically take courses, choose courses that relate to the discipline and to, as I say, the act of teaching itself. Occasionally there's an anomaly, but it does happen that people may want to take something that's not related. We believe they ought to—if you're teaching mathematics, be in the periphery at least. So, that's our position, that we have the obligation to examine, and I don't think we hold a tight rein on that one, but we have an obligation to examine to make sure that there's credibility in the process and occasionally we are not able to agree with the value of a particular course and won't accept it as credit toward advancement of a salary schedule.

Mrs. MORELLA. Well, what I'd like to see is that you would work with the subcommittee on this bill with an open mind in terms of the fact that there is, as you have said, an inequity that is taking place and the fact that as I look at the testimony to come before us by witnesses many of them also have been involved with other projects at the same time that they have been teaching. I see here that mention is made of being trained also by the military as supplemental support teams for a field hospital and there are some

other examples of that too. So, it seems as though we should not be ignoring these people in terms of what is their just reward or remuneration or recognition that they should have.

Dr. STREMPLE. I agree. There's no argument there and I don't feel in any absolute terms that we ought to not take those kinds of things or that we don't have degrees of freedom to look at that kind of an issue. We do have and should.

Mrs. MORELLA. That's good. Thank you.

Dr. STREMPLE. Well, we don't want to reward basket weaving if you're teaching mathematics or whatever and we won't do it unless the law requires it.

Mrs. MORELLA. You use an example which is obviously a hyperbole, but I think we've got to strike a balance.

Dr. STREMPLE. It is extraordinary to find it, but it happens occasionally.

Mrs. MORELLA. Occasionally I guess it would anyplace, in any way, regardless of what the regulations are. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Thank you, Mrs. Morella.

Mr. Stremple, are you opposed to permanent teachers having the same RIF and placement service benefits as other Federal employees? I know you expressed concerns about part-time and temporary teachers. But I wonder about career DODDS teachers, full-time.

Dr. STREMPLE. I'm not quite sure of the question, sir. But no, I'm not opposed to it. I think that we hire teachers in the accepted service just in the same way that we hire attorneys and so on, and that they don't have—and I'm not an expert here. They don't have the same processes to go through. We have degrees of freedom in the way we hire them. We don't have to go through the normal personnel practices and so on. We have degrees of freedom in the way that we move people because of shifting populations and this kind of thing, and the way that we can let people go.

So, the school district is somewhat unique and the profession somewhat unique and is treated differently.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. What's life like out there in the system right now with all the downsizing? Even in Europe to some degree there are base closures. What are your personnel trends right now and how do you feel people are being treated? What are your challenges and problems? Can you give us a larger scope view here?

Dr. STREMPLE. I spend a lot of time in the field. I spend a lot of time in classrooms and visit teachers and so on, and I have to say that just as in the United States when there's a plant closing or whatever, the apprehension is high. There's no question about that. Is there any diminution of effort on the part of teachers in terms of teaching and so on? Absolutely none. I'm just so proud and pleased with the efforts they're making.

I have to say this about all that. We are in a favorable position. We are not going to lay off teachers. We're not going to. There's no plan to RIF teachers this year. As I look to the future, to the long future based upon what the administration is saying as far as the placement of troops in Europe, 100,000 over the next foreseeable future. We do not—

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. I'm sorry, Mr. Stremple. I do have a bad right ear, quite frankly. I think it's partially me, but maybe if you just

speak a little louder or a little bit more into the microphone. I have a little bit of trouble hearing sometimes.

Dr. STREMPLE. OK. Yes, sir, I will.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Thank you.

Dr. STREMPLE. We do not plan to RIF teachers. There is no plan to do so this year, nor in the foreseeable future. I look at these figures. We have had an agreement with the Department that even though the population, the military population is declining, that we'll base our teacher force on the population of students that we anticipate having in September. Even though the drawdown might be dramatic during the year, we don't reduce the number of teachers. So, really we've gone through 2 or 3 years of rather rich class size opportunities and this kind of thing.

I said earlier that there is apprehension out there. There's no question about that. When you have a draw down, when you have just at home when factories close or whatever, and we're going through that. I'm very empathetic with that issue. But under the circumstances, I think people are handling it rather well and recognize that as a minimum they're going to have jobs. Now, not everyone will end up exactly where they want to end up. You have to put them where the kids are obviously. But we're in a position to do that.

I did say, if you didn't hear it, that teachers are working very hard. I see good practices in our classrooms. It's as good as anything I've ever seen in my experience and I'm proud of them.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. What am I missing here? Is the number of overseas military personnel diminishing? I would assume at some point the number of students would be diminishing, the number of schools in some instances.

Dr. STREMPLE. Yes, sir.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. So, do you have any projections on that?

Dr. STREMPLE. Yes, sir, we do. The military keeps us appraised of the drawdown that's taking place. We know where the drawdown is taking place and what schools we're going to close. We're on top of that. So, we know where we're going to have to be moving teachers and cutting back and what schools we have to close. I think we're closing seven or I've forgotten the figure. Seven or maybe 13 this very year. Fifteen on the list this year.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. And you don't anticipate RIFing any teachers still?

Dr. STREMPLE. No, sir, we're not going to RIF any. When I say any, I don't believe a single teacher will be RIFed. We have—as I said, I've argued this one assiduously. Not argued, but pleaded this assiduously with the people to whom I report and they see the wisdom of not drawing down teachers in direct relationship to the drawdown of students. But at some point, we'll catch up to it after the students go home. Then at the end of that school year, we have to begin catching up and you go back to your normal pupil-teacher ratios.

So, we have not RIFed a single teacher and I don't think we'll be RIFing anyway. We are—he's pointing out to me we are reducing staff. There's no question about that, because of normal turnover. When our troops come home, many of the wives or husbands of the military are our teachers. So, they come home with them.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. But isn't it likely to be the case that the number of teachers from year to year are going to be less and less?

Dr. STREMPLE. It is true, but that's being handled through normal turnover. This is one of our big years really. We'll probably come down almost 1,000 teachers. But even under those circumstances, we don't anticipate RIFing any.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. People that are normally leaving anyway, given their preferences, other locations, et cetera, and you don't rehire in that slot.

Dr. STREMPLE. Yes, sir. We've invoked the voluntary—the VSIP and the voluntary early retirement programs and those kinds of things. We've had a good cooperation with our Section 6 schools here in the United States and really they have a VSIP program, so that if they let somebody go and somebody takes a VSIP, then we could replace them with our teachers. We've invited school districts from the United States to be overseas and to recruit our teachers. We had people from Guam come over and recruit our teachers. Some have accepted those positions.

So, with that and with the normal turnover, with VSIP and so on, we are not preparing for a RIF.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Let me try this just one more time and then we'll bring up subsequent witnesses. What is your real objection to reciprocity or transfer of sick leave? In the Federal service, generally speaking, this is done. As I understand it, it's done for people in need who are sick or disabled and need additional sick leave. So, what is the real objection? What am I missing there?

Dr. STREMPLE. Well, the objection has to do with the fact that it is sick leave and not accrued leave.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. I'm sorry. I'm not being argumentative, but to me that's just words. Can you explain it to me a little better? What's that mean?

Dr. STREMPLE. I can't explain it any better than that, sir. That's the Department's position and I'm relaying it to you.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. OK. Well, thank you, Dr. Stremple. Is there anything you want to add?

Dr. STREMPLE. No, sir. We'll be here and listen to the testimony of other people and engage in dialogue. I want you to know that I don't have an attitude of contentiousness.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. No, I don't think you do either. I really appreciate you being here and you're doing your job. I think you would be generous to make yourself available throughout the hearing if you would do that. I know it's an added burden on you today, but some of these points will come up and questions arise. If you'd be here to help us out to ferret what the problem is, Mr. Stremple, it would be great.

Mrs. MORELLA. Mr. Chairman, could I ask a question which just occurred to me. Are there any pension or retirement benefits that these DODDS teachers have available other than Social Security?

Dr. STREMPLE. Excuse me, ma'am?

Mrs. MORELLA. Are there any pension benefits, retirement benefits that they can avail themselves of?

Dr. STREMPLE. Yes. They're under the same—they have the Federal retirement program just similar to any Federal employee.

Mrs. MORELLA. They have the FERS program?

Dr. STREMPLE. Yes. Yes, ma'am.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Now we have Mr. Jack Rollins, president of the Overseas Education Association. I somewhat misspoke a little bit earlier getting at a point, but Mr. Brian McGee, president of the Education Association of Panama, also an overseas teacher from Okinawa, Mr. Brian Otterson, and Jerry Morris, acting director of legislation of the AFT.

Welcome, gentlemen. Your statements will be accepted for the record. Perhaps if you could summarize and highlight. I've read some of the statements, quite frankly, but not others. If we could proceed in the order you were introduced, please begin, Mr. Rollins.

STATEMENT OF JACK ROLLINS, PRESIDENT, OVERSEAS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION; ACCOMPANIED BY BRIAN MCGEE, PRESIDENT, EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF PANAMA; BRIAN OTTERSON, OVERSEAS TEACHER, OKINAWA; AND JERRY MORRIS, ACTING DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATION, AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

Mr. ROLLINS. Yes, sir. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I especially thank you for the opportunity to testify on this legislation and also I do thank you for sponsoring the legislation.

And the honorable lady did recognize that we've been before the body several times with legislation, substantive legislation to Congressman Ford that has not passed. But the record should show that each time we pursue legislation, we do so when we've exhausted, in our minds, the attempts to get our benefits changed through litigation and/or negotiations. So, our ultimate end is the Congress when we cannot get it through other means.

The legislation you have before you now is addressing some of the issues that are outstanding and I need to address some of the concerns that have been raised about the intent and I will do so in the testimony.

We're under a law that's called Public Law 86-91, which was adopted in 1959 and also amended in 1961 and 1966. Those amendments specifically—

The purpose of this initial legislation was to establish an employment system of educational standards similar to those in the United States. Since that time, changes in educational requirements and living conditions overseas require consideration and enactment of changes proposed under H.R. 3975.

The Department of Defense Dependents Schools came in existence on July 1, 1979. It was passed by Congress and signed into law on November 1, 1978. Before this, the system existed on a temporary basis, reinstated each year through budget appropriations for the Department of Defense and the military components. Back in 1946, these schools were initially established on military installations as needed. They were staffed and funded by the respective military command having jurisdiction over the site where the schools were located. As a result, no two schools were necessarily alike in curriculum programs, staffing, nor logistical support.

This existed until 1963 when DOD consolidated the operation of schools under regional commands for the Department of Army assuming jurisdiction over the schools in Europe and the Air Force in the Pacific, the Navy in the Atlantic regions. This consolidation

was an attempt to unify administrative responsibilities and give credence to an educational system needed in accreditation recognition.

Despite the attempt though, problems still existed and therefore further consolidation came about under the Department of Defense school system in 1975 that now exists and with headquarters in Arlington, VA.

Throughout this period of development, from 1946 to the present, the problems with curriculum, staff needs and logistical support continues and remains a concern of Congress, as has been addressed in previous legislation to the President. There's no question that everyone wants quality education for American military dependents and civilian dependents of the Federal Service overseas. Today, I want to focus on one aspect of quality education, which is the need to attract, retain and motivate outstanding teachers presently employed and future employment in the system. This brings me to the need for the present legislation which addresses the needs of these teachers. Not all the needs, but the ones that we seek relief for the moment.

On the concept of equal benefits for equal employment, I've heard testimony to the fact that we're trying to get something for a classification of employees that would mean additional cost to the Department of Defense and other agencies worldwide. What has happened in the employment overseas with local hires, as we call them—and I need to explain what that concept means. We have a category of employees called local hires, meaning they were recruited overseas. But within the concept of local hires you have two primary factions, one called tourist hires and the other called dependent hires. Over the years, there's been some discrepancies on how those employees have been treated in relationship to benefits. The primary concern of this legislation, the ultimate end of it, is trying to seek relief for approximately 100 employees in a school system still remaining that has worked for DODDS more than 5 to 25 years without benefits.

Now, I've heard testimony and I know there's concern raised——

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Mr. Rollins.

Mr. ROLLINS. I'm sorry.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. If you'd recede there for a moment, but you say without benefits, period?

Mr. ROLLINS. Yes, sir. They were hired locally and since they were hired locally they received no living allowance, no transportation or anything.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. OK. But they do have medical and retirement?

Mr. ROLLINS. They receive medical and retirement upon conversion and that's another faction that needs to be addressed on what they call "not to exceed" employees. We have an added problem with that. But these employees specifically have been converted and have remained overseas, employed without the——

Mr. McCLOSKEY. But again, it's a very important point to me——

Mr. ROLLINS. Yes.

Mr. McCLOSKEY [continuing]. Because we have problems in other areas, but they do have some benefits?

Mr. ROLLINS. They have health benefits and they have retirement.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Retirement, OK.

Mr. ROLLINS. Yes, sir.

The concern raised by some groups is over how the disparity in treatment of dependent hires, and the OEA needs to go on record to explain that we have a long history of litigation and negotiation attempts to rectify some benefits for the dependents of the military sponsors and civilian sponsors. We will continue to exercise our rights in bargaining and litigation to try to remedy some of the inequities. But the concerns seem to be that in our legislation we wanted to bestow benefits on this classification of local hires that have none, recognizing that some dependents have entitlements as long as they remain under a sponsor overseas. They receive the full medical dependency benefit and it's only when their sponsor leaves a command and they remain employed overseas, those categories should be included in the legislation to gain full benefits such as the local tourist hires. But they're small in numbers and most times they will remain employed for the duration of a school year and leave to accompany their sponsor back to the States.

There presently are regulations that allow certain benefits to be bestowed on those dependents when the sponsor leaves the command, leaves the environment. We have recently won through negotiations the right for these dependents of military and civilians to gain some living quarter allowances upon retirement of the sponsor. But we still have a group of people, approximately 100 remaining, that have absolutely none of the benefits even though they have remained employed with DODDS for better than 5 years.

That's primarily the concern. We're not here trying to take away any benefits. We're not here trying to deny benefits to dependents, nor any other local hire, but we have a group of people who do need relief. I'll be able to discuss that more in detail later.

Now, on the issue of the leave transfer programs, this is an attempt to bring us under the law to allow us to use our educator's leave, as we call it, teacher leave, for the purposes of donating leave to fellow colleagues who are in need.

Now, recognizing that the law was drafted because of annual leave, which would not cost the government additional moneys, and has become a problem for us because they envision teacher leave costing additional moneys if used for this purpose. But when this law was enacted, the teachers prior to the enactment of Public Law 86-91 were competitive service employees, did have annual leave, but when the law was passed and we were converted to accepted appointment, they combined the concept of annual leave and sick leave into teacher leave.

We presently have 3 days of any purpose leave each year that we can use for any purpose. At that time, it was a concept that that is equated to annual leave. We're prepared to propose that if nothing else can be done, at least take the concept of any purpose leave and grant us relief under the law by amending the law to include teachers any purpose leave. That's our request.

On the health benefits, we understand from testimony that law exists to cover us, but the purpose of the legislation as we propose is to make it absolutely a fact that teachers are included in the present statutes. The statute cited under previous testimony in our mind covers the military and not civilians, but there are other stat-

utes that cover civilians in a RIF purpose. But we want to make sure that the law specifically addresses teacher positions as qualifying for it.

That's my testimony, sir. I'm open for questions at the appropriate time. The gentlemen to my right and left and the far right are prepared to testify.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Thank you, Mr. Rollins.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Rollins follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JACK ROLLINS, PRESIDENT, OVERSEAS EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee on Civil Service of the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service, I am Jack Rollins, President of the Overseas Education Association, an organization which represents approximately 6,000 teachers in three regions administered by DoDDS. Thank you for the opportunity to give testimony in support of the proposed House bill, H.R. 3975. This legislation addresses areas of concern expressed by teachers in the DoDDS System.

P.L. 86-91 was adopted in 1959, with subsequent amendments added in 1961 and 1966. The purpose of the initial legislation was to establish an employment system with educational standards similar to those in the United States. Since that time, changes in educational requirements and living conditions overseas require consideration and enactment of the changes proposed under H.R. 3975.

The Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DoDDS) came into existence on July 1, 1979, as required by P.L. 95-561, titled "Defense Dependents/Education Act of 1978". It was passed by Congress and signed into law effective November 1, 1978. Before the passage of this legislation, the overseas schools system existed on a temporary basis, reinstated each year through budget appropriations by the Department of Defense and its military components.

Initially, in 1946, schools were established on military installations as they were needed. The schools were staffed and funded by each respective military command having jurisdiction over the site where the schools were located. As a result, no two schools were necessarily alike in curriculum programs, staffing, and logistical support. This situation existed until 1963. In 1963, DOD consolidated the operations of schools under regional commands with the Department of Army assuming jurisdiction over schools in the European region, the Department of Navy over the Atlantic region, and the Department of Air Force over the Pacific region.

This consolidation was an attempt to unify administrative responsibilities and give credence to an educational system needing accreditation recognition. Despite the attempt, problems of uniformity existed among the regions. As a result, further consolidation took place in 1976 when all military schools overseas were placed under the Office of Dependents Schools as a field activity under the Office of the Secretary of Defense, separate from the military commands and located in Alexandria, Virginia. P.L. 95-561 brings us to the present, with no changes made in the administration of the DoDDS System, but a significant change made in the budgeting process. For the first time, the DoDDS budget was recognized as appropriations separate from the military budgets.

Throughout this period of development (1946 to the present), the problems with curriculum, staff needs, and logistical support continued, and remain to be a concern of Congress, the Department of Defense, DoDDS, and the Overseas Education Association in their goal of "Quality Education" in the Overseas Schools System.

There is no question that everyone wants quality education for American military dependents. Today, I will focus on one aspect of "Quality Education"—the need to attract, retain and motivate outstanding teachers. This brings me to the need for the legislation proposed in H.R. 3975. This legislation addresses needs of teachers—(1) equal benefits for career teachers; (2) compensation; (3) re-employment of displaced teachers; (4) recertification; (5) a leave transfer program and sick leave sharing; (6) continued health benefits. A broader definition of "teachers" is no longer needed and we suggest it be removed from the legislation.

RATIONALE

Equal Benefits for Equal Employment

As incentives to teach overseas, stateside teachers were promised mobility; given differential compensation for working in hardship areas; cost-of-living allowances to offset adjustments in living costs overseas versus stateside; living quarters allow-

ances (LQA) or free housing to compensate for selling their property stateside; and housing overseas comparable to living conditions in the United States. In the past, these benefits were ultimately extended to all teachers regardless if they were recruited stateside or overseas. Once provided, the benefits remained for retention purposes.

During the 1970's, two important changes came about concerning these benefits and incentives. The first important change was the decline of American economic influence worldwide, accompanied by an increase in the standard of living of other countries, particularly the industrial nations where DoDDS schools are located. This resulted in an upsurge of living costs related to living overseas.

The second important change was the all volunteer U.S. Forces with a recognition that better pay and personnel policies were necessary to attract and keep personnel in the military.

In order to induce military personnel to serve overseas and to serve for extended tours, the military makes every effort to allow families to accompany or join the military sponsor overseas. Additionally, since many officers and noncommissioned officers have spouses who are qualified teachers, every attempt is now made to guarantee those spouses' employment overseas as teachers, known as local hires. Local hires (NTE's) represent cost savings because housing and transportation allowances are not paid to local hires to come overseas. Both DoDDS and the military gain from this program, and the OEA does *not* propose to change this practice of hiring qualified military spouses as teachers in the DoDDS system.

An outgrowth of the hiring of more military spouses overseas was the changing of regulations so as to prohibit the paying of benefits to *any* teacher recruited overseas. This change impacted adversely on non-military local hires (at one time a large source of teacher personnel) and military spouses who remained as teachers overseas after the military sponsor left the service.

For years, legislative proposals have been introduced to provide career teachers recruited overseas equity in benefits compared to teachers recruited stateside. The present legislative proposal attempts to provide DoDDS teachers hired overseas equity in benefits if they remain in the system *without* benefits from military or civilian spouses. The question of equity comes after the initial year of employment when the same teacher is to be retained as a career employee. We seek to end the situation of disparate treatment of two career employees based solely on the geographical place of hire.

Leave Transfer Program

Our teaching force is composed primarily (80%) of women. Of that number a majority are forty or more years of age.

Unfortunately, under 20 USC Section 904, our teachers earn only "Teacher Leave" and as such have not been able to participate in a Voluntary Leave Transfer and Voluntary Leave under Chapter 63 of Title 5, United States Code.

There have been many cases where our members wanted to donate leave to a colleague, but could not under the current law. I personally am aware of a career teacher stationed in Germany who came to our office in Washington, D.C. for help. She had breast cancer, elected to come to Georgetown Hospital for treatment that would entail some two months, and was forced to go into a leave without pay status. She could not qualify for disability retirement since she would return to work well within a year. During this most trying time she was alone and financially hardpressed. The passage of this legislation would benefit such cases.

Continued Health Benefits

This is not a new concept, but provides for the Agency and the employee to continue to pay the same amounts they are now paying for health coverage.

This coverage applies to a teacher who suffers involuntary separation due to a reduction in force. Health care is currently in the news and we support health care reform but until it becomes law, we request favorable consideration of this section.

CONCLUSION

While we have not included transfers in this proposed legislation, it is our hope that some program could be legislated in order to address the hardships described by Mr. Otterson and Mr. McGee. We recognize that with the drawdown of our schools, emphasis has been properly placed on moving teachers to avoid separation because of a Reduction in Force. What must not be forgotten is that for comfort and amenities few countries match the United States. In every sense of the word, living and working overseas is a true hardship in many areas. Any transfer proposal addition that would not impede the passage of this bill would receive our full support.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Mr. McGee.

Mr. MCGEE. Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify before this subcommittee about the Department of Defense Overseas Educators Act.

My name is Brian McGee. I have taught elementary and middle school for the past 21 years, 10 of which have been for DODDS. Four of those years were in Bahrain and 6 in Panama, where I am presently stationed. I will not restate everything I said in my written testimony, but I ask your indulgence if I highlight a few points.

As educated men and women, you all know the power of a good education. Studies have shown time and again that smarter, more experienced teachers produce students who are smarter, have higher test scores, lower student dropout rates and greater numbers of students who go on to further education.

In the past, DODDS has attracted a higher caliber of teacher through average salaries but above-average benefits. The Department of Defense Overseas Educators Act will help to assure that the Federal system of educators will stay competitive and keep the high caliber of teachers it has recruited in the past and not lose those it has.

In the short time I have available to me, I would like to verbally stress my written request that the proposed legislation be amended to include a clause in the joint travel regulation that would say, "DODDS will conduct a viable transfer program." DODDS educators have only one place they can work, and that is overseas. Is it fair that DODDS has the right to hire a person for a location—you'll notice that in Dr. Stremple's testimony he said that there are hard to fill and undesirable locations—and then keep them in that location their entire career? Could you see the military, USAID or the State Department getting and keeping competent people if they did not have a transfer program?

Dr. Stremple has responded to numerous congressional enquiries that the transfer program is not an entitlement, but only one of his tools for filling vacancies. This has created a severe morale problem as is demonstrated by the more than 1,100 people who have signed a petition here showing dissatisfaction with the program. Even more importantly, this dissatisfaction is shown by the approximately 1,450 educators last year who applied for a regular transfer when only 67 of them received one.

What I am requesting of this committee is not to tie the hands of DODDS on this issue. I am merely asking you that you give it direction. DODDS should have a plan and a structure to implement a viable transfer program.

A second issue I would like to verbally single out is a—

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. How should that be structured, Mr. McGee, a viable transfer program?

Mr. MCGEE. Pardon? I missed that.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. How would that be structured?

Mr. MCGEE. The point that I'm trying to make is that presently we are being told that you are not entitled to a transfer program, there is no entitlement, and they're only going to use this to fill their slots. So, when the union goes and tries to talk to management and say, "Hey, we need to get more transfers," they say,

"Well, we'll put in x number of slots," and they decide how many slots they're going to actually put in into a transfer round or a transfer program. If we don't like it—you know, Jack Rollins talked to that specifically, but if we don't like it, that's the breaks.

What I would actually like to see is that all slots, all slots in DODDS go into a transfer program and then management or Congress actually decide how much money it has available to run the transfer program. In other words, how many dollars are there, how many people can we actually transfer?

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Okay. Please proceed.

Mr. McGEE. A second issue I would like to verbally single out is a request that you include in this proposed legislation a new section that would amend either the law or the regulation in such a manner that teachers hired from the United States with Panama as their first duty station be eligible for some form of temporary living allowance. Teachers in all other regions of DODDS, as well as all other federal employees going overseas, are authorized temporary living allowances, but because of the clause in the Panama Canal Treaty, teachers coming first to Panama are not authorized this allowance. For teachers and administrators transferring into DODDS Panama, they get around this by granting something called TQSE, which is temporary quarters subsistence expenses. But regulations do not allow the granting of TQSE to newly hired personnel. In talking with the personnel director in Panama prior to coming for the hearing, he was very supportive of this provision. In fact, he wrote the wording I have included as exhibit E.

In conclusion, I would like to provide the committee with a few things I have brought with me in my flight from Panama. One is a book our fifth grade students and some teachers did on the experience of American children and adults caught up in the military invasion of the Panama, called Just Cause. I hope it will provide the committee a look at some of what your DODDS educators go through not just in Panama, but in different parts in the Philippines, Korea, Europe and every other place we have DODDS educators.

I would also like to give the committee some personal letters from teachers who want to express their feelings on some of these issues. I think you will find the people in the field have a very different opinion on some of these issues than do the people who never get out of Washington. Since DODDS has not surveyed its teachers on these issues, they may also be surprised to see how they feel.

The Federal school system is a very funny animal. You are the closest thing we have to a school board. You provide the direction to your managers, DODDS, and they implement your directives. I ask that you help your system and its educators by acting positively on these important issues.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Thank you very much, Mr. McGee.

[The prepared statement of Mr. McGee follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BRIAN MCGEE, PRESIDENT, EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF
PANAMA

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of H.R. 3975. This bill is an extremely important step in

the overall improvement of the education system that supports the military community living and working overseas. The cry continually goes out that we need to improve education. As a career teacher, I agree wholeheartedly, but often we only hear calls like: "Back to basics", "Less frills and more work", "A longer school year". There is an element of truth to all of these slogans, but, if we are going to give our military dependents the best education possible, we also need to tend to the needs of the professionals who teach our students.

A study was done in Texas that considered the effects of teacher ability, teacher experience, class size and professional certification on student performance in reading and mathematics. Data on millions of students in 900 districts was examined during a period running from 1986 to 1990. I want to read what one of the education field's most respected journals, *Phi Delta Kappan*, April 1993, had to say about the study and its effect on students and their education. I quote, "Two rather simple findings emerged. First, teacher's academic proficiency explains 20% to 25% of the variation across districts in students' average scores on academic achievement tests. The smarter the teachers, the smarter their pupils appeared to be. Second teachers with more years of experience have students with higher tests scores, lower dropout rates, and higher rates of taking the SAT. Experience counts for about 10% of the variation in the students' test scores across districts. Dollars appear to be more likely to purchase bright and experienced professionals, who in turn, are more likely to provide us with higher-achieving and better motivated students."

How does this relate H.R. 3975? The answer is simple. DoDDS has in the past been able to select the cream of the education crop. I first joined DoDDS in 1984. I never checked the data, but while being recruited I was told that there were about ten applicants for every opening in DoDDS. Why could DoDDS be so selective in whom they hired? It wasn't the salary, for although the salaries were good, my initial salary in DoDDS was slightly less than what I received in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. What attracted me was the chance to live and teach in other countries. My school district gave me a two-year leave of absence and, in talking to my superintendent at the time, I firmly believe he agreed to give me the leave with the expectation that my living and working abroad would give me a great educational experience that I would be able to eventually share with my "home" school district.

My first assignment was Bahrain during the Iran/Iraq War. It sounded a bit scary to all the relatives back home, but for my family and me, it was a magnificent learning experience. We were strongly tempted to stay longer in Bahrain, but after four years we felt we needed to take the opportunity to experience more of the world and we transferred to Panama. We arrived in Panama just in time for elections, riots, and a great deal of civil unrest. We lived through "Just Cause" during which DoDDS families in Panama suffered almost a 1% casualty rate, three deaths, which was actually higher than that of the military who were actively involved. In the Philippines, numerous DoDDS teachers had to evacuate because of the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo. Many suffered large losses due to looting which followed the event, and their lives were seriously disrupted. In Bahrain, teachers were in the path of SCUD missile attacks. These are some of the more obvious recent events, although there are certainly a lot more.

This is all part and parcel of being a DoDDS teacher. DoDDS teachers are the only civilian employees of the U.S. Government who have to stay overseas the entire term of their employment. There are no state-side jobs. I went to Panama for an experience, but having served our time in Panama, I felt it was time to move to another location to broaden both my and my family's background and equally important, to find a safer environment to raise my family. I applied for transfers in 1990, 1991, 1993 and again I am trying in 1994. Nothing! Yet there are always vacancies for elementary teachers in almost all DoDDS locations, literally hundreds of them.

DoDDS has continually stated that the low transfer rate is a result of the military drawdown, but that isn't the problem with giving teachers a transfer. The military is undergoing this same drawdown, yet, obviously, they continue to transfer people. The real problem is DoDDS has chosen to say transfers during drawdown are impossible. If I had a computer programmer available to me, I could prepare a viable teacher transfer program. DoDDS has run its program in the past via paper and pencil only. It is no wonder that it is an unwieldy process; however, ways of simplifying it do exist. The program seems to be lack of will, rather than method. DoDDS refuses to leave the past. It appears that they do not want a viable transfer program.

I believe I adequately proved this last year, at least in terms of the Panama Region. DoDDS Panama was asked to submit all openings to DoDDS Washington so that DoDDS could run a program to place excess teachers in Europe as well as some of the 1,500 regular teachers seeking a normal transfer. I was told by the OEA union representative to the transfer proceedings that, on opening day, DoDDS Pan-

ama, one of five regions, had to that point submitted zero openings. Because we were expecting something like this, I, as local union president, had gotten representatives at all the buildings to study their faculties and project openings for the next school year. We gave DoDDS the names of 73 teachers, out of a staff of 350 teachers, that were either not coming back or were limited term employees who could be replaced by excess teachers in Europe. With this documentation, DoDDS Washington was able to ask that DoDDS Panama review its projected openings.

I am providing the committee with this documentation as well as introductory letters which I sent the House Armed Services Committee back in April of 1993. I will call this exhibit "A". The documentation was sufficient for them to question the adequacy of the DoDDS transfer program and in August of 1993 Congress directed the GAO to audit the DoDDS transfer program looking specifically at its adequacy. That was a good first start. Being fearful that nothing would happen, I started a local petition drive to show them that there really was a need. The idea caught on and it spread to a number of other locations in DoDDS although it never made it to all DoDDS locations and was not pushed by any newsletters or union publications. The end results were over 1,100 signatures. I have sent the original copies of these petitions to the House Armed Services Committee, but I have included a copy which I will call exhibit "B".

More than the number of signatures that came back on this petition are the numbers of teachers who actually applied for transfers in 1993. There were approximately 1,700 teachers who applied. Approximately 250 of them were excess and were applying for slots through the world-wide transfer program. The other 1,450 were just regular teachers looking for a transfer. There are about 9,000 DoDDS teachers world-wide. Many of these individuals are military spouses, or local hires who normally are not interested in transferring except when they move with their spouses. A good block of the rest have chosen to continue working and teaching in locations they are in. But let's look at this transfer program. There were over 1,700 applications. DoDDS, in response to congressional inquiries points out that there were 289 transfers. They are accurate in this number but they fail to point out that approximately 222 of those were people who were declared excess and who either had to accept a new assignment or face separation from the federal government. That means that there were only 67 regular transfers. Since there were about 1,450 people applying for transfers that were not facing RIF and of those 1,383 are unhappy employees. Further, this isn't the first year they are unhappy. The year before this, there were zero regular transfers.

Most civilian employees are placed overseas from jobs in the states. They normally have re-employment rights of some sort, and they stay overseas for a specified length of time, usually not to exceed five years. DoDDS teachers do not work under these conditions. A DoDDS teacher changes locations only on the basis of transfers. Teachers living overseas face many unpleasant problems. For example in my location (Panama City, Panama), there is a high crime rate. Houses are robbed, rocks are sometimes thrown through car windows. You may say, so what, life is tough in D.C. also. That may be true, but in Panama the electricity and/or water go off frequently because of utility failures. We average a water or electrical failure in Panama City about twice a week. Exhaust fumes from leaded gas is so bad that one of our teachers quit DoDDS and took his child back to the States because of lead poisoning. Besides this we also face political upheaval. Of course, military personnel overseas face the same problems if they live on the economy, but they are never stuck in any location indefinitely. I have been living in Panama for six years, but I know of families that have been stuck in any location longer than that, continually trying to get a transfer every time they are eligible. Over six years is a long time to be in one location which is not of one's choice. Does this effect morale? You know it does! What effect does this have on the mission? If staffs are unhappy and feel trapped in situations they do not want to be in, that affects productivity. If your best and brightest staff feel their needs are not being met, how long will they stay with you? When one looks back on that study done in Texas one can see it is important to keep our best and brightest teachers. If we truly want to develop a strong education system for our military dependents and federal employees living abroad, we must look to the needs of the people that implement the programs. You cannot just buy more books or new computers. You need to invest in people. You need to invest in the professional educators that are teaching your military children.

There have been a number of congressional inquiries lately into the DoDDS transfer program and the answer given by Dr. Stemple, DoDDS Director, is always consistent. He says, "The DoDDS Transfer Program is not an employee entitlement, but rather one method for management to fill vacant teaching positions." To resolve this issue, I ask that language be included in the Joint Travel Regulations saying something to the effect that "DoDDS will continue a viable transfer program." While this

will not assure teachers of a transfer, and management will still be able to act as good stewards of the public trust, it will at least force management to sit down with teachers and discuss the establishment of a viable program. Congress will at least have acknowledged that there is a problem with telling teachers you can be hired to serve in one location overseas for your entire teaching career and if you do not like it, quit.

Now what about the "local hires." This issue has been around for a long time and through H.R. 3975 this subcommittee has the opportunity to finally put it to rest. Local hires are treated by DoDDS like second class citizens. You have heard of the term equal pay for equal work. Well, that is not the case for local hires. They are providing a much needed service and yet they are not given equal remuneration. Panama has a couple of specific examples I would like to use.

Two of the families that lost members during "Just Cause" had local hired teachers in them. Local hire, Candi H. was gunned down by a Panama Defense Force individual one hour before the official invasion started. Vickie D. was a local hire although her husband was a CONUS hire with benefits. As "Just Cause" began, soldiers loyal to Noriega abducted Vickie's husband from his house and before the eyes of his whole family. A short time later he was assassinated. What was the end result for this family? Not only did it lose a husband and father, the family lost CONUS hire privileges because DoDDS considered Mrs. D. a local hire and refused to give her the benefits lost by her husband through his assassination. This issue was grieved, but the arbitrator found in favor of management saying that despite the humanitarian appeal, the law did not allow Mrs. D. to be given her husband's benefits even though her family paid the ultimate price for serving their country as overseas employees. Rather than provide you all the documentation as it is quite lengthy, I have only included the conclusion of the arbitrator's decision and some general information. I will call this exhibit "C".

Another personal story that I can relate to you is that of a close friend of mine, Deanne H., from Bahrain. When I went to work in Bahrain back in 1984, she had already been serving DoDDS for ten years. Because she had been hired locally, DoDDS would not give her CONUS benefits. She was forced to live in a small apartment of less than 400 square feet. Husband, wife and fifth grade son crammed into a 20 by 20 space. Mrs. H. and her family served DoDDS during the Iran/Iraq war when there were continual reports of mines floating in the gulf and oil from damaged tankers continually flooded the beaches. She was there during the bombing of the U.S.S. Stark and donated clothing and cleaning equipment because the U.S. Navy could not get supplies into the Stark quick enough to supply the immediate needs of our service men who had lost all their personal possessions on the fire aboard the Stark. She was there when teachers held a social at our school for the survivors of the Stark, prior to their being sent back to the United States. She was also there during Desert Storm and during SCUD missile attacks on Bahrain. While I was not there at that time, I know for a fact that the teachers that stayed in Bahrain. While I was not there at that time, I know for a fact that the teachers that stayed in Bahrain to teach the DoDDS dependent children during that crisis were trained by the military as supplemental support teams for the field hospital stationed on Bahrain. Being a close friend and knowing Deanne, she would have been one of the first to volunteer for this sort of a job. By now Deanne has served DoDDS and the U.S. Government for twenty years, and she still does not have equal pay for equal work.

I would like to give the committee an article from the *International Educator*, "Late Winter" edition, 1994, exhibit "D". It was written by a local hire serving in Japan. In this article, he outlines the plight of this much maligned group of educators as well as his own personal efforts to overcome this problem through legislative action.

I have only told you the stories of two local hire teachers who happened to be friends of mine. DoDDS is filled with similar stories of people who have served their country for many years now and are still not being given full benefits. Something needs to be done about this issue and your committee has the change to do something that is not only right but also fair.

I would like to request that the Civil Service Subcommittee consider adding one more provision to the H.R. 3975. For a long time now the Panama Canal Treaty has created an inequity that I am sure was not intended by the writers of the Treaty. The Treaty says that teachers in Panama would not be allowed any pay allowances other than a modified Living Quarters Allowance (LQA). New educators first coming into DoDDS have been historically authorized a Temporary Living Allowance (TLA) to defray expenses such as hotels as they look for a new quarters. There is another form of funding, Temporary Quarters Subsistence Expenses (TQSE) which is not an actual ALLOWANCE and is has been used for DoDDS teachers

transferring in from other regions. By regulation TQSE is not authorized for new federal hires and so it cannot be given to teachers who have as their first duty station Panama. Therefore, year after year now, new teachers who arrive in Panama have been denied help in getting settled that is given to all other federal employees world-wide. DoDDS has said that this is an issue that can only be legislated away and DoDDS attorneys have in the past drafted legislation to resolve this inequity. The reason it was probably not followed through on has to do with the need to set legislative priorities and this problem also effects such a small group, about 10 teachers in Panama. Teachers arriving from other locations or Civil Service employees arriving from elsewhere have met the prior employment criterion and thus got TQSE. This subcommittee has the opportunity to resolve this long standing inequality. Prior to coming for this hearing, I discussed the issue with our Personnel Director in Panama. He gave me an outline of what he feels is what needs to be done to rectify this issue. I would like to submit that as exhibit "E".

I would also like to take just a moment to address the issue of a "voluntary leave transfer program" and a "voluntary leave bank." Over the last few years I have personally seen a number of instances in which this would have been not only very helpful but ultimately humane. When a family is facing a health crisis, the last thing it wants to worry about is running out of sick leave and having income cut off. The stress is unbelievable on a family and the federal government should do all in its power to give employees an opportunity to reach out and support each other during times of need. These programs will do this and the precedence for them is already well established.

Thinking that you might benefit from hearing what some other DoDDS educators have to say on the issues addressed by H.R. 3975, I asked a few of my co-workers to write you letters on areas that they are personally interested in. I was forced to bring them with me when I flew in for this hearing, so I could not get you advance copies. I would like to respectfully submit these personal letters now as exhibit "F".

In closing I am going to take the opportunity to provide your subcommittee with a copy of a children's book the fifth graders at my school did on "Just Cause". I submit it to this committee as exhibit "G" as it gets into some of the things DoDDS teachers deal with while living overseas and supporting the military dependent families. What we are asking this committee to do is help the DoDDS teacher right some inequities. It is my contention that these teachers are doing one heck of a job, often under very adverse conditions, and they would appreciate and they deserve support. Thank you for the opportunity to address your subcommittee. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

[Due to the high cost of printing, Exhibits A-G have been retained in the subcommittee's files.]

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Mr. Otterson.

Mr. OTTERSON. Chairman McCloskey and members of the Committee, I am Brian Otterson and presently I am a science teacher for the Department of Defense Dependent Schools, DODDS, at Lester Middle School in Okinawa, Japan. From 1986 until June 1993, I, my wife and daughters, ages 9 and 5, were assigned to Taegu American School in Taegu, South Korea. The school averaged about 650 students, grade kindergarten through grade 12. Because of the numerous memorable experiences of living and working there, I wish to provide reasons and examples for Congress mandating a movement or transfer program each school year.

In the spring of 1986, I was interviewed by a DODDS administrator in Massachusetts. During the interview, I was told two things which later proved to be untrue. No. 1, that DODDS had a transfer program which moved teachers who volunteered to new duty locations. Since my father was in the Marine Corps for 22 years and we have moved many times, I understood this to mean that my family and I would have the opportunity to change locations. I was not informed by the interviewer that the DODDS transfer program had been suspended due to the enactment of the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings bill for the school year 1986-87.

No. 2, that science teachers were in such high demand in DODDS that I would be able to get a transfer at any time I chose to apply.

In May 1986, I was offered a science position at Taegu American School. Since I had been informed that I could not decline the offer and seek another position with DODDS, my wife and I decided we should accept the position in Korea. Based upon the information provided during recruitment, we thought that we could put up with a lot and apply for a transfer when we wanted to move. In other words, we could put up with anything for a year or two. After 2 years in Korea, we decided we would like to transfer to another location, so I applied for one. When I did not receive a transfer, other teachers in my school indicated that this was very unusual because they knew of several science openings in schools. Over the next 5 years I applied five more times for transfers anywhere else in DODDS. I did not receive an offer. In addition to my not receiving the movement I had expected, I was frustrated more by the fact that there were science openings in other locations, but the positions were not available at the time the transfer program was conducted or the principals did not submit the vacancies until after the transfer program was over. Consequently, teachers from the United States were hired to fill these positions.

The following are some of the problems and frustrations I encountered while living and working in Taegu. No. 1, housing in Korea presented two major problems, being required to move houses at the end of a lease, and getting major repairs accomplished. There is no on-base housing for civilians in Taegu. We were at the mercy of the Korean landlords, who are famous for not negotiating a lease renewal at the end of the lease. My family and I changed houses three times in 7 years and the average movement was once every other year. I know of one DODDS family that was moved each year for the 5 years they were in Taegu. These moves were at our own personal expenses and cost approximately \$500 each time.

The second problem was in getting problems fixed with the house. It could be tremendously difficult. In the third house we lived in, the motor for the oil heater broke in November. Sometimes it was only 40 degrees in the house and my landlord would not assist with the problem. I finally got it fixed in March, at my own expense. The delay was caused by not being able to find anyone who could fix the motor. I telephoned the landlord, base housing office, requested Korean teacher assistance, paid for three different Korean groups to come look at the motor and finally had a replacement part ordered from Japan in order to heat my house.

Another example of difficulties in the house, in 1991 when a new apartment building was being built behind our house, the weight of the construction trucks broke the water pipes to our house and other houses on the street. We did not have any water. With my limited Korean, I explained the problem to the construction foreman and he told me that he would fix the pipe as soon as they had completed the apartment building in about 4 or 5 months. I requested assistance from our landlord and she said she did not want to get involved. I then called the housing authority on base and was told to have patience.

In complete frustration, my wife parked the family car blocking the road and refused to move it. The base military police were called to the scene and told my wife that she could be arrested. Eventually, the construction foreman and the city engineer agreed to work together to fix the pipe and had it fixed in 2 hours.

Water pollution. Even in the best of conditions, we were advised by the base officials not to drink or cook with the off-base water. We bought bottled water rather than carry it from the base. On March 8, 1991, the Doosan Electronics Co. dumped 325 tons of phenol in the city water supply. Three days later we were notified by the U.S. Army not to drink, bathe or wash clothes. In fact, we were instructed not to have any contact with the water. The Army informed us that the concentration of phenol in the water was 320 times the amount allowed by the World Health Organization. As a science teacher, I was interested to know how toxic phenol actually was, so I looked it up. I learned that if a person were to paint a 10 by 10 inch patch of skin with 88 percent phenol, the person would die in 90 seconds. For about 2 weeks we bathed and washed clothes on the base.

Health care and concerns. In 1989, my wife went into premature labor during her seventh month of pregnancy. The small dispensary in Taegu could not deal with the problem, so she was medically evacuated to Seoul, 150 miles away. After 2 days there, the doctors decided that she had to be at a facility that was equipped to handle a premature baby. The closest was at Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines. So, she was flown by helicopter to Osan Air Base and then to the Philippines.

Shortly after landing at Clark, she had a cesarean section and delivered our second daughter 9 weeks early. After surgery, my wife was placed in intensive care and on a respirator for 3 days due to complications. In addition, my daughter was in intensive care for 5 weeks. After a week in the Philippines, my wife and child were moved to Seoul where they resided for a month in the hospital. While I have nothing but praise for her care and treatment, having all this happen 2,000 miles away was a great source of anxiety.

Diseases endemic to Korea are cholera, legionnaires disease, tuberculosis, hepatitis and a rare type of pneumonia called mycoplasmic pneumonia, a cause of concern for Americans. The latter is a major cause of illness of the teachers in Korea.

Another cause of stress in Korea is the traffic. Taegu has a population of about 5 million people and is the textile manufacturing center of the country. When we first arrived in 1986, the traffic was light to moderate. Each year more and more cars appeared in the streets. By the time we left Korea last June, the traffic was almost as bad as Seoul, where approximately 700 new cars are added to the streets everyday of the year.

In 1990, the accident death rate for Korea was the highest in the world. Streets are clogged with traffic from 7 in the morning until 11 at night. Many traffic signs and laws are ignored by most drivers. Being involved in a traffic accident is a constant worry for Americans in Korea. If one is in an accident, fault for the accident is almost always assigned to the Americans regardless of who is really at fault. Fears keeps many teachers from even getting a car

and license. This contributes to the feeling of isolation that many people have.

Both the Army and the Air Force recognize the hardships of living in Korea and only require a 1 year tour of duty for unaccompanied service members and 2 year tours for those accompanied by their families. Teachers, however, are indefinitely assigned to Korea.

War. The threat of war with North Korea is a constant source of anxiety for everyone in Korea. The Army tells us that if war breaks out they will evacuate all the dependents and civilians immediately. However, in reality, it would appear that evacuation would be impossible and we would have a difficult time reaching the sea. Many of our colleagues were evacuated from the Philippines after the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo and it took over 1 week to evacuate all the civilians and dependents. They were already at the sea and just had to await the arrival of the ships to take them out. In addition, it was not a war situation.

Safety. In the fall of 1992, I was returning by bus from Seoul with about 40 students and two other teachers from a weekend sports trip. About 50 miles south of Seoul, we were stopped by a group of demonstrators. About 100 veterans of the Korean Army were protesting their exposure to Agent Orange during their tour of duty in Vietnam. We listened to speeches denouncing the United States for about 4 hours and watched as a Korean construction foreman was attacked by several demonstrators because he tried to break up the group. At one point, a gun was pulled out by one of the demonstrators and placed at the head of the construction foreman. All this occurred about 40 feet from our bus. This was not a typical sports trip, but I mention it to illustrate the impact that the political climate can have on students and teachers.

In conclusion, I enjoyed many of my experiences of living overseas and living in Taegu. I was able to see the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul. I visited Malaysia, Hong Kong, and Japan. The faculty of Taegu American School was excellent and I enjoyed the students and other aspects of the school. I feel that the educational experiences that my children have received from living overseas are irreplaceable. In addition, my wife and I have many stories and we have grown emotionally coping with these experiences. I just wish that we could have been able to move sooner.

However, the frustration of not being able to move as promised and the difficult living conditions almost forced me to resign. In fact, I paid my own way to the United States for an interview in Maine over spring vacation of 1992. Over \$2,000.00 was spent, but I was second for the job offer. This is an example of another difficulty in working for the Department of Defense. It's very difficult and expensive to try to find a job in the United States while working for DODDS, especially in the Pacific.

We hope that you will see our plight and assist in mandating that DODDS have a movement program in the future. I've seen several good teachers give up and go home after several years in Korea with no hope of moving.

Thank you for listening and considering my presentation.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Otterson.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Otterson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BRIAN OTTERSON, OVERSEAS TEACHER, OKINAWA

Chairman McCloskey and members of the committee, I am Brian Ottersson and presently I am a science teacher for the Department of Defense Dependent School (DoDDS) system at Lester Middle School, Okinawa, Japan. From 1986 until June, 1993, my wife and daughters (ages 9 and 5) were assigned to Taegu American School in Taegu, South Korea. The school averages about 650 students, grades kindergarten through grade 12. Because of the numerous memorable experiences of living and working there, I wish to provide reasons and examples for Congress mandating a movement or transfer program each school year.

In the spring of 1986, I was interviewed by a DoDDS administrator in Massachusetts. During the interview I was told two things which later proved to be untrue.

1. That DoDDS had a transfer program which moved teachers who volunteered to new duty locations. Since my father was in the Marine Corps for 22 years and we had moved many times, I understood this to mean that my family and I would have the opportunity to change locations. I was not informed by the interviewer that the DoDDS transfer program had been suspended due to the enactment of the Gramm/Rudman/Hollings bill for school year 1986-1987.

2. That science teachers were in such high demand in DoDDS that I would be able to get a transfer any time I would choose to apply.

In May of 1986, I was offered a science position at Taegu American School. Since I had been informed that I could not decline the offer and seek another position in DoDDS, my wife and I decided that we should accept the position in Korea. Based upon the information provided during recruitment, we thought that we could put up with a lot and apply for a transfer when we wanted to move. In other words, we could put up with anything for a year or two.

After 2 years in Korea, we decided that we would like to transfer to another location, so I applied one. When I did not receive a transfer, other teachers in my school indicated that this was very unusual, because they knew of several science openings in schools.

Over the next 5 years, I applied 5 more times to transfer anywhere else in DoDDS and did not receive an offer. In addition to not receiving the movement I had expected, I was frustrated more by the fact that there were science openings in other locations but the positions were not available at the time the transfer program was conducted or the principals did not submit the vacancies until after the transfer program was over. Consequently, teachers from the United States were hired to fill these positions.

The following are some of the problems and frustrations I encountered while living and working in Taegu.

1. Housing in Korea presented 2 major problems, being required to move houses at the end of the lease and getting major repairs accomplished. There is no on-base housing for civilians in Taegu. We were at the mercy of the Korean landlords who are famous for not negotiating a lease renewal at the end of the lease. My family and I moved houses 3 times in 7 years. The average movement was once every other year and I know of one DoDDS family who moved each year of the 5 years they were in Taegu. These moves were at our personal expense and cost approximately \$500 each time.

The second problem was in getting problems fixed with the house. It could be tremendously difficult. In the third house we lived in, the motor for the oil heater broke in November. Sometimes it was only 40 degrees in the house and my landlord would not assist with the problem. I finally got it fixed in March, at my own expense. The delay was caused by not being able to find anyone who could fix the motor. I telephoned that landlord, the base housing office, requested Korean teacher assistance, paid for three different Korean groups to look at the motor and finally had a replacement part ordered from Japan in order to heat my house.

Another example of difficulties in the house, was in 1991 when a new apartment building was being built behind our house. The weight of the construction trucks broke the water pipes to our house and other houses on our street. We did not have any water. With my limited Korean, I explained the problem to the construction foreman. He told me that he would fix the pipe as soon as they had completed the apartment building in about 4 or 5 months. I requested assistance from our landlord and she did not want to get involved. I then called the housing authority on base and was told to have patience.

In complete frustration, my wife parked the family car, blocking the road and refused to move it. The base military police were called to the scene and told my wife that she could be arrested. Eventually, the construction foreman and the city engineer agreed to work together to fix the pipe and had it fixed in 2 hours.

2. Water Pollution: Even in the best of conditions, we were advised by the base officials to not drink or cook with the off-base water. We bought bottled water rather than carry it from the base. On March 8, 1991, the Doosan Electronics Company dumped 325 tons of phenol in the city water supply. Three days later we were notified by the U.S. Army not to drink, bath or wash clothes. In fact we were instructed not to have any contact with the water. The Army informed us that the concentration of phenol in the water was 320 times the amount allowed by the World Health Organization. As a science teacher, I was interested to know how toxic phenol actually was and looked it up. I learned that if a person were to paint a 10 by 10 inch patch of skin with 88% phenol, the person would die in 90 seconds. For about two weeks we bathed and washed clothes on the base.

3. Health Care & Concerns: In 1989, my wife went into premature labor during her 7th month of pregnancy. The small dispensary in Taegu could not deal with the problem so she was medically evacuated to Seoul, 150 miles away. After 2 days there the doctor's decided that she had to be at a facility that was equipped to handle a premature baby. The closet was at Clark Air Base in the Philippines. So, she was flown by helicopter to Osan Air Base and then to the Philippines.

Shortly after landing at Clark, she had a cesarean section and delivered our second daughter 9 weeks early. After surgery my wife was placed in intensive care and on a respirator for 3 days due to complications. In addition, my daughter was in intensive care for 5 weeks. After a week in the Philippines, my wife and child were moved to Seoul where they resided for a month in the hospital. While I have nothing but praise for her care and treatment, having this all happen 2,000 miles away was a great source of anxiety.

Diseases endemic to Korea are cholera, legionnaire's disease, tuberculosis, hepatitis and a rare type of pneumonia called mycoplasmic pneumonia. A cause of concern for Americans. The latter is a major cause of illness for the teachers in Korea.

4. Another cause of stress in Korea is the traffic. Taegu has a population of about 5 million people and is the textile manufacturing center for the country. When we first arrived in 1986, the traffic was light to moderate. Each year more and more cars appeared in the streets. By the time we left Korea last June, the traffic was almost as bad as Seoul where approximately 700 new cars are added to the streets every day of the year.

In 1990, the accident death toll for Korea was the highest in the world. Streets are clogged with traffic from 7 in the morning until 11 at night. Many traffic signs and laws are ignored by most drivers. Being involved in a traffic accident is a constant worry for Americans in Korea. If one is in an accident, fault for the accident is almost always assigned to the American regardless of who is really at fault. Fear keeps many teachers from even getting a car and license. This contributes to the feeling of isolation that many people have.

5. Both the Army and Air Force recognize the hardships of living in Korea and only require a 1 year tour of duty for unaccompanied service members and 2 year tours for those accompanied by their families. Teachers, however, are indefinitely assigned to Korea.

6. War. The threat of war with North Korea is a constant source of anxiety for everyone in Korea. The Army tells us that if a war breaks out they will evacuate all the dependents and civilians immediately. However, in reality it would appear that evacuation would be impossible and we would have a difficult time reaching the sea. Many of my colleagues were evacuated from the Philippines after the eruption of Mt. Pinatubo and it took over 1 week to evacuate all the civilians and dependents. They were already at the sea and just had to await the arrival of ships to take them out. In addition, it was not a war situation.

7. Safety. In the fall of 1992, I was returning by bus from Seoul with about 40 students and 2 other teachers, from a weekend sports trip. About 50 miles south of Seoul, we were stopped by a group of demonstrators. About 100 veterans of the Korean Army were protesting their exposure to Agent Orange during their tour of duty in Vietnam. We listened to speeches denouncing the United States for about 4 hours and watched as a Korean construction foreman was attacked by several demonstrators because he tried to break up the group. At one point, a gun was pulled out by one of the demonstrators and placed to the head of the construction foreman. All this occurred about 40 feet from our bus. This was not a typical sports trip but I mention it to illustrate the impact that the political climate can have on students and teachers.

In conclusion, I enjoyed many of my experiences in living overseas and living in Taegu. I was able to see the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul. I have visited Malaysia, Hong Kong and Japan. The facility of Taegu American School was excellent and I enjoyed the students and other aspects of the school. I feel that the educational experiences that my children have received in living overseas are irreplaceable. In ad-

dition, my wife and I have many stories and we have grown emotionally in coping with these experiences. We just wish that we would have been able to move sooner.

However, the frustration of not being able to move as promised and the difficult living conditions almost forced me to resign. In fact, I paid my way to the States for an interview in Maine over spring vacation (over \$2,000) but was second for the job offer. This is an example of another difficulty in working for the Department of Defense, it is very difficult and expensive to try to find a job in the United States while working in DoDDS, especially the Pacific.

We hope that you will see our plight and assist in mandating that DoDDS have a movement program in the future. I have seen several good teachers give up and go home after several years in Korea with no hope of moving.

Thank you for listening and considering my presentation.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Mr. Morris of the AFT.

Mr. MORRIS. Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to appear here today. I'm Jerry Morris. I'm with the American Federation of Teachers and the Overseas Federation of Teachers is an affiliated organization of the AFT. I'm appearing on behalf of its president, Marie-Sainz Funaro, who could not be here today due to a previous commitment. We have talked at length about this and she prepared most of the statement.

Let me just say that the OFT thinks that H.R. 3975 is an important bill and would make very constructive improvements in the compensation and employment conditions of OFT members. We're strongly in support of it.

Now, the OFT represents about 800 employees who teach primarily in the Mediterranean Basin and it has been representing employees for about 20 years. Based on that experience, as I said, OFT and AFT strongly support the bill and urge Congress to enact it. We think that the protections and benefits included in H.R. 3975 are particularly important in the face of drawdown of the U.S. military forces. While the drawdown is a result of positive changes in world affairs, and we all welcome these, it will nonetheless result in some dislocations.

We do have some specific recommendations. I'll just briefly touch on those.

There's, at one point in the bill, in section 2, 12 months provided for an opportunity to have preference in other positions, in being considered for other positions. The OFT would recommend a longer period if possible because, as I understand it, there's a window of opportunity to seek employment in teaching positions. If it occurs in the spring, and the person finds also in the spring they're not going to continue being employed, sometimes they don't have the opportunity to scramble. Their years might run out before the next window is really open.

On section 3, teacher recruitment, the OFT strongly endorses this passage and recommends its approval by the Congress. OFT did a survey recently in its bargaining area and got a high rate of response on this survey, about 90 percent. It found that less than 10 percent, or only 64 of the teachers in the DODDS Mediterranean Region, are locally hired. Of these 64 local hires, only 18 had no housing allowance of any kind. They also found that these people were not transient employees, but most had, two-thirds had employment of more than 9 years. So, it's reasonable on that basis to assume that they should be treated as permanent employees, deserving the same consideration of compensation and benefits as other workers.

With respect to transportation allowance, most of DODDS employees return to the United States every 2 years and it costs about \$2,000 speaking just of the Mediterranean Region and the group not receiving benefits that I mentioned before. The OFT estimates that this would be an additional cost of about \$54,000 annually.

On section 4, compensation, leave transfers and recertification, the OFT would be very supportive of a voluntary leave transfer program. This has been a concern for a long time and would provide equity.

With respect to recertification, OFT welcomes the provisions on the bill as providing greater flexibility and setting a reasonable limit on the recertification course hours required.

With respect to continued health benefits, capping the employee contribution of those who are involuntarily separated due to a RIF within a specific time frame is an important safety net. It will protect people who through no action of their own may find themselves without coverage.

That is just to briefly summarize our comments on the bill. We strongly support it and look forward to working with you to see it is enacted.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Morris follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JERRY MORRIS, ACTING DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATION,
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF TEACHERS

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee, I am Gerald Morris, Acting Director of Legislation for the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). The Overseas Federal of Teachers (OFT) is an affiliated organization of the AFT and I am appearing on behalf of its President, Marie-Saint Funaro.

The Overseas Federal of Teachers thanks you for this opportunity to make a statement in support of H.R. 3975, a bill that will make some very constructive improvements in the compensation and employment conditions of OFT's members. The OFT, is the bargaining agent for approximately 800 employees who teach overseas for the Department of Defense Dependent Schools (DODDS). These employees are stationed in Italy, Spain, Portugal at the Island of Azores, Turkey, Bahrain and Greece—although the last school in Greece will close at the end of this academic year.

The OFT has been a bargaining agent for DODDS employees for about twenty years. Based on that experience, the OFT strongly support the legislation before us, H.R. 3975, and urges the Congress to enact it. The protections and benefits included in H.R. 3975 are particularly important as we face a drawdown of U.S. military forces. While this drawdown is the result of positive changes in world affairs, it will nonetheless result in dislocations of dedicated civilian employees who serve the members of our military and their families in DODDS schools in all corners of the world.

The OFT would like to offer some specific comments and suggestions in reference to H.R. 3975. In Section 2, Temporary Measures to Facilitate Reemployment of Displaced Teachers, subsection (c), entitled Limitation, the OFT suggests that the twelve month limitation be extended to twenty-four. Most school systems hire teachers during the spring for the following academic year. Few teachers are hired during the remainder of the year because school staffing is set well before the time school opens in the fall. If a DODDS employee is displaced and receives a Reduction-in-Force notice in the spring and is not hired almost immediately by another school system—the employee may have to wait until the following spring to find employment. Lengthening the period for consideration by DODDS to twenty-four months would alleviate this problem. Normally, twelve months is a reasonable period of time for someone to find employment, but that is not the case in teaching because recruitment occurs during a short period of time in the spring for the following academic year.

Section 3. Teacher Recruitment. The OFT strongly endorses this section and has called for the passage of similar legislation for many years. The OFT recently conducted a survey in the Mediterranean Region, a region representing about ten percent of the DODDS teacher workforce. The survey, for which there was a ninety per-

cent response rate, shows that less than ten percent, or sixty-four, of the teachers in the DODDS Mediterranean Region are locally hired. Of the sixty-four local-hires, only eighteen had no housing allowance of any kind. the remainder had housing allowances through their civilian or military sponsors.

The OFT survey also revealed that fourteen of the eighteen employees without housing allowances were employed for more than four years. In fact, a full two-thirds (twelve of the eighteen) were employed more than nine years. Thus, these employees are not a transient group without a commitment to DODDS. On the contrary, OFT believes they are dedicated, successful career employees who have proven themselves and deserve equal compensation for equal work. If one considers that the average housing allowance is about \$10,000 per year, the total annual cost for the eighteen employees in the Mediterranean Region is \$180,000.

In regard to allowances for transportation, most DODDS employees return to the United States every two-years at a cost of about \$2,000. A family of three (some employees are single with no dependents) would cost about \$6,000 every two years or about \$3,000 a year. Thus, transportation costs for the eighteen locally hired employees and their families in the Mediterranean Region would cost about \$54,000 annually. OFT believes this sum of money is small in comparison to the service provided by these dedicated employees. Again, they deserve equal compensation for equal work.

Section 4. Compensation; Leave Transfers; Recertification. Establishing a voluntary leave transfer program and leave bank would allow colleagues to assist each other during times of difficulty—times when they are faced with illness and the possibility it will be compounded by not having a paycheck. Being unable to transfer leave and to contribute to a leave bank has caused long-lasting financial hardships for some of our DODDS teachers. Passage of this legislation would provide DODDS employees the same benefits enjoyed by other government employees.

In regard to recertification, the OFT fully supports changing the recertification program as stated in H.R. 3975, which would allow greater flexibility in the coursework an employee can take and would set a realistic limitation of six semester hours.

Section 5. Continued Health Benefits. Capping the employee contribution of those who are involuntarily separated due to a reduction-in-force, within a specific time frame as described in the legislation, is an important safety. The government must recognize that its civil servants, the DODDS teachers in this case, may be seriously harmed through no fault of their own. In addition, the legislation sets a realistic limit to the government's liability.

The Overseas Federation of Teachers wants to be on record strongly supporting this legislation. The OFT and AFT applaud your effort to provide reasonable benefits and conditions for DODDS teachers who serve our military families around the world. Thank you.

Mr. ROLLINS. Mr. Chairman, may I ask a request? From reviewing my testimony, I found I left out some major provisions. I would like to have the opportunity to submit those later for the written record and I would like to comment on a couple of them that I think are essential based on testimony. One is the recertification and one is compensation.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Please.

Mr. ROLLINS. On recertification, sir, the intent is to put DODDS Program on comparability with the United States. As a norm, in the United States when a teacher is hired initially by a school system, they are asked to be certified to teach in certain subject matters and be credentialed by a State to teach. Then that respective State requires a period of time, 5 or 6 years, that teachers are to be recertified with additional hours of credit. Six hours is the norm. That we agree with. But what DODDS has done, they've taken one step further. After our initial recruitment and certification, instead of requiring just 6 hours of additional work, and we do not wish to change what they now have in terms of that should be in what we're working or anything at DODDS, we're in agreement with the regulation on that.

What we're seeking is to abolish the position they take that in order to be recertified I must meet the new standards that they create in the last 3 years of my cycle. The effect of that is to say that I can be hired today and 6 years from now no longer qualify to teach in that subject matter, nor be reassigned or anything of that nature because I don't meet the new standards that they incorporate for new recruits. I know of no system in the United States that requires that additional standard. I don't deny DODDS trying to upgrade their teachers and I support that as long as they would give us support in tuition assistance and training, but that opportunity doesn't exist by any degree overseas. They require graduate work only. A lot of times our careers do not require additional hours of graduate. A lot of undergraduate work is all we need to upgrade our standards.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. How about the concern, Mr. Rollins, I think expressed by Mr. Stremple, that it be in a particular area?

Mr. ROLLINS. Sir, we agree that it should be in compliance with the reg. that they say 3 hours will be in what we're presently teaching and 3 hours of anything else in DODDS. We don't deny that. We're in agreement with that. But what has happened with the stipulation of the 3 year cycle at the end and what happened in DODDS to give you an example, in 1989 and 1990, they incorporated enormous changes in their standards and the facts will show, if evidence needs to be presented, that half of the DODDS elementary work force were disqualified overnight with these new standards, that those teachers presently on board did not have. Therefore, if they held firm with those requirements, they could not have been recertified at the end of their 6 year cycle.

DODDS has other discrepancies related to that. Unfortunately, and Dr. Stremple and I have discussed this many times and he has expressed a willingness to share with us an attempt to try to resolve some of these difficulties, but I can seek only legislation to put us on a par with the United States. But the other discrepancies are that—fortunately Dr. Stremple waived the qualification standards for reassignments. But we have an accreditation agency called North Central Accreditation which accredits our schools on a period of 7 years. Each time they investigate one of our schools and they find an employee who does not meet the new standards for that year, they are discredited and therefore in many instances reassigned involuntarily because they are no longer certified in a system they were certified in initially. We find that a tremendous discrepancy that needs to be addressed. With this legislation, it would put us on par. We're not trying to lower the standards, we're trying to face reality and seek some means of having our people remain qualified to teach.

The other one is compensation. Many people do not understand that when the law was passed in 1959, prior to the law we were competitive service employees and at that time a grade equivalency of a seven, GS-7. So, when the law was passed, they sought to put our pay on a comparability with a GS standard and also with our enrollment standard in DODDS. The facts are that when they put 100,000 population standard, that was just something to go by because those pay systems in urban systems seem to be something comparable to competitive service employment at that time.

Since that time, we not only have moved away from the G-7 standard, but in some regards we're even all the way up to GS-12 standards now for certain benefits in the program. But at the time that they put the law into effect, the urban school systems of 100,000 plus was the comparability to try to make us at least competitive to what we were at the time. Now, since that time, as the facts will show, urban centers no longer have the money.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Mr. Rollins, I've read that in your testimony.

Mr. ROLLINS. Yes.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Actually you talk about recertification and the salary discrepancy situation and you've anticipated two of the major questions I did want to ask you. But what would you suggest? Would you want an average of the—

Mr. ROLLINS. Sir, by deletion of the word "urban" as the testimonies have shown, it would definitely give us the benefit of adding suburban America to our salary and it would double the number, approximately double the number of systems to be surveyed. But I don't find that an administrative problem. Even if it's necessary, we'll do it for them. Up until the early 1980s, NEA did the survey anyway and gave it to the wage fixing authority and they just adopted what NEA did. It's only been in the last few years that they decided to do it themselves. We most willingly will go back to help with the survey in order to put our salary back in comparability with the United States.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Well, what would you say are the average salary discrepancies? Obviously to some degree you think DODDS teachers are being exploited compared to their state-side brethren. How bad is it on salary?

Mr. ROLLINS. Right now there's a discrepancy of \$2,000 to \$3,000 only. But what's happening over a period of time is that school systems like the big cities have not increased salaries. As a matter of fact, they've decreased them. So, as we're stuck with those cities, we're subject to have our salary reduced. This year we estimate a 2 percent pay raise. Last year it was marginally 2 percent. We have not been able to even keep up with the Federal standards of what is comparability for other Federal service and military.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. I guess I understand that, but as you know, part of the reinventing government motif is economy, fewer positions ultimately, fewer costs. I represent Bloomington, IN. The headlines today are Thompson Electronics in essence pushing for \$4.50 less hourly in benefits for RCA employers. I think what Mr. Strempel has said, it's a buyer's market. He claims no problem in essence, I guess, in staffing these positions for however many they need with quality people.

So, that's not to say all your concerns aren't valid, but my obvious point is we are in tough fiscal times and you are not alone. Obviously in a way, much of our bill cuts against the grain on all this. Wouldn't you agree?

Mr. ROLLINS. I'll start with the business of recruitment. The record could be shown also that a great number of our recruitment counseling teachers in lower paying school systems are seeking a bigger pay. So, we're not comparable to some of the better systems and know why they wouldn't go overseas, especially with the present political climate as it is.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Well, the Post Office does two-tier hiring now. There's two totally different wage bases depending on when you're hired.

Mr. ROLLINS. Yes.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. I don't particularly like it, but these are the times.

Mr. ROLLINS. Yes, sir, I understand that.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. These are the times we're in.

Mr. ROLLINS. And I know that ought to be considered. But our purpose is to try to put us on the standard by which we won't slip further, lower than what we have now.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Your figure is that a DODDS teacher gets on average \$2,000 to \$3,000 less than what they should be getting?

Mr. ROLLINS. Yes, sir. Other than what I'm calling suburban America, yes.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. I ask if anyone wants to chime in on this question. It strikes me that it must be a fairly unusual system, DODDS schools, and I have to learn more about DODDS schools as far as communication. I was struck by the idea that there's no local school board over there. I know we're going to hear from other people after this, but if you have a concern about curriculum, if you're a parent with concern about curriculum or there's a concern that a teacher or a parent has, is there really a structure and quality process to get change and conflict resolved?

Mr. ROLLINS. Sir, speaking of the curriculum area and budgetary concerns and so forth, we have incorporated what we call school advisory committees that are structured from the school levels on the national level. That is a forum by which these issues are addressed by the parents and teachers to seek some informal, if not formal, resolutions. Then we have a negotiations arena in which employees can address some concerns for relief. But we don't have a forum that links the school level to the national level in between that can somehow express concerns in these arenas. There is no schoolboard overseas and our schoolboard, as previous testimony was—everything in DODDS now in Washington.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. So, is there a real process communications problem? Do you have a real problem here or are all these concerns in essence adequately taken care of?

Mr. ROLLINS. Well, as far as communications, I don't know how to answer it other than with this consolidation more and more concerns are raised about being further and further removed from the point of resolution, being in Washington versus overseas. And employees as well as parents had expressed a concern that they no longer have the ability to directly get involved in some of these attempts.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Anyone else want to comment on the question?

Mr. ROLLINS. I have one last issue that needs to be addressed and that's the employment of displaced teachers. I did not want it to be misunderstood that under contract we have reemployment rights for union employees in our union, that if we're displaced because of RIF we have priority consideration for 2 years.

What we're seeking here is there are some people that are non-union that are temporary hires. Their dependents as well as other unions don't have that provision in a contract. At least the legisla-

tion could say that all employees would fall under some kind of reconsideration, reemployment rights.

Under present practice, if a local hire dependent is displaced because of the RIF procedure, being a temporary hire they have no rights under RIF. They are displaced. They have no return rights over anyone else, even though they remain overseas on the same site or are reassigned by the military to another site. They presently have no guaranteed reemployment rights and we seek to have at least those folks have some kind of priority consideration on rehires if they're displaced because of draw down procedures.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Thank you for those comments.

Mr. MCGEE. Can I make a comment, then, on your earlier question?

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Yes, I'd hoped that you would.

Mr. MCGEE. You were talking about whether or not and how we go about getting issues resolved and solved and there are many times in which we have sent problems up to Dr. Strempel and attempted to actually have them resolved, but I'll give you an example.

About a year ago we had a teacher at one of our schools down in Panama who was a stepdaughter to Dame Margo Fontaine, and in order to be able to get this individual leave without pay to take care of this dying woman we had to go through Congress. OK? It took over 3 months to get this resolved and a lot of congressional inquiries and she ended up getting her leave without pay 1 week prior to the death of Ms. Fontaine. OK?

So, there is a problem. I will say, at least where I have been in Panama presently for 6 years, we have a problem. I can't speak for all the other—

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. If you have any ideas you could communicate, not necessarily in the context of this legislation, writing them personally to me, I hope to make some visits at DODDS sites.

Mr. MCGEE. Well, I think, bringing the issue up, I think that being here right now and having the opportunity to present this to you, I think that some of these issues, some of the letters that the teachers have written will be taken a little bit more seriously, so I'm an optimist.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. As something that has come up. We don't have in this legislation any mandate of transfer policy, but, listening to Mr. Otterson, being stuck in nightmare alley indefinitely, would there be any comments from anyone else about the strong need for a formal transfer policy that in essence—

Mr. MCGEE. As an example, I've been in Panama for close to 6 years now and I've applied for a transfer every single opportunity and presently—well, I'll give you a good example. What's happened is, because of the complication—we have a transfer program that allowed for a point system—because of how hard it was to implement this, they did away with it and would only go with service computation date. So, if I had a low service computation date, I could have sat down in Panama for, let's say, 6 years. A teacher could come in from Germany who has a high service computation date and she could be gone next year, but I will continue to sit in Germany because DODDS is not willing to develop a good system to be able to handle all these problems.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Mr. Stremple, would you have any reaction to that? I mean, quite frankly, I guess I personalize many things, but I spent 1 year and a half once in Tripoli, Libya, 18 months, and I felt every day and every hour of it at the time as a young airman and I have these nightmares about being reassigned to Tripoli, Libya, about once a year. I go back and some of the personnel have changed and some haven't, but 7 or 8 or 9 years in a place where you and your family are miserable, what does your system do for mobility and redress in cases like that?

Dr. STREMPLE. Chairman, we have, with at least our major teachers association, a transfer program that has been—there's been some impediment as a result of the draw-down because we have as a requirement that the first thing we do is to take care of excess employees, so that—

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Could you come up and sit there and speak into the microphone? This will probably be the only thing I'll want to ask you right now.

Dr. STREMPLE. He'll keep me accurate with it, but, in the case of transfers we had a rather active transfer program just a few years ago before the draw-down started and we had criteria for moving people that we worked out with the association and in concert with the association. We have committees from the teachers association that are involved and were involved in that process.

The draw-down, though, has made an impact on our ability to transfer people because we establish and we believe we ought to establish the idea that the first thing we're going to do is take care of excess employees so that when there is a draw-down, when people come home and we're closing schools and so on, we want to give the first priority to those teachers wherever there's an opening in the system throughout the world and it reduces the number of opportunities that are out there to transfer people.

And then after that, we look at a transfer program that, first of all, takes into consideration the personal problems, such as health problems and this kind of thing, and then we look at remote areas and there are points ascribed on the basis of the remoteness of the area, Korea being one of them—I think Korea is one of them—and then seniority in that particular area and so on.

So, there has been a system. Transfers for us are very expensive. Budget is a consideration. It costs \$15,000 to \$18,000 to move somebody around the world and so on, and so that, to be candid, has been a constraint. But, we did have a reasonably well working transfer program and then problems were created as a result of the draw-down. Now, perhaps we can do better with it. Maybe there's a fairer way to do it.

But I personally am not opposed to transfers. I think it's a healthy thing to do within budget constraints and within the need, whether it be the obvious need to take care of excess employees first and then begin looking for ways to transfer people.

I've had some of the same nightmares you've had, incidentally, and they're real. They do exist.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Can you say, once we get to wherever it's likely going to be in the draw-downs and all that, that there could be a real start at a policy of priority transfers involving the remote and stressful areas and so forth?

Dr. STREMPLE. We did have that in practice. Now, was there absolute satisfaction? No, because we have far more people wanting to transfer than you're able to transfer, but we did have a process that involved committees composed of both management and teachers and so on and worked at it to the best of our ability. But in the last 2 or 3 years it's been a tough call because we've had to—the first thing we say is don't hire anyone until we place our excess employees, and I think that's fair.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Could there be a meeting of the minds between you and Mr. Rollins as to what you've heard him say on the recertification concerns?

Dr. STREMPLE. Yes. I heard what Jack said. We do have a little tougher standard than many school districts in terms of recertification. We don't lay people off if they're not recertified, but we do make periodic changes in our certification requirements as we see needs for different standards for teachers in terms of background that they need to teach in a particular subject area and so on.

And we had set some limitations. That's true. If you don't meet these standards, then we won't transfer you, as an example, and that kind of thing has gone on. But we haven't laid people off.

Mr. ROLLINS. Also because of your waiver——

Dr. STREMPLE. Yes. We waive a requirement and we don't lay people off, but we do put some hurdle there. If you don't meet the standard, then we're not going to transfer you to another position and so on.

But I think the question is a matter of standards. Should we practice what's going on basically in the United States or set a higher standard. This area is close to my heart. I think the standard ought to be as high as we can live with.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. I'm sorry? Your last comment was?

Dr. STREMPLE. The standard for certification of teachers ought to be as high as we could possibly live with and I feel strongly about that.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. And as Mr. Rollins has said, the curriculum, the 6 hours or whatever, obviously would be in a pertinent area for the school systems

Dr. STREMPLE. Right. Well, we're in agreement there. That's right.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Anyone else have anything else they want to add here?

Mr. OTTERSON. Mr. Chairman, you might wonder, if I never received a transfer from DoDDS, how did I move from Korea after 7 years to Okinawa. The director in the Pacific——

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. It did cross my mind, actually.

Mr. OTTERSON. The director in the Pacific, Dr. Jerry Bruno, recognized the hardships of living in Taegu Husan in a small base called Chin Hen and instituted his own transfer program in his own realm in the Pacific last year in order to move people out of those locations and into bases in Japan and Okinawa. He moved about 62 teachers just in the Pacific, about 12 from the school that I'm teaching; then the worldwide program, moved another 65.

It's surprising to me that such a big group of schools throughout the entire world can only move the same number that the small Pacific region moved.

Mr. ROLLINS. Sir, if I may, the bottom line from our standpoint is we want Congress to tell the system they will have a transfer program, but you have sole jurisdiction on the management of what it's going to cost and how many people you're going to move. All we ask is the standard be there. It's been canceled on us twice and we have no way to deal with that. So, if nothing else, just say you'll have the program and then we'll work out the details.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. It would seem to be basic common sense and to everyone's benefit.

Dr. STREMPLE. Well, let me respond and be candid. If you're going to mandate it, let's pay for it. It's a costly kind of thing.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Mr. Stremple, that's a given. We only do that to other units of Government, counties and cities and States. I'm a former mayor, so I know there's faults in that area.

I thank you all very much. It's been very helpful and educational, I might add. Thank you.

Our final witness is Michelle Webb, president of the National Military Family Association.

Ms. AHL. Mr. Chairman, Michelle Webb is the president of the National—

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Excuse me. I had a previous list. The updated list is you're Catherine Ahl, then, director of Government Relations and Education Specialist, National Military Family Association.

Ms. AHL. That's right.

STATEMENT OF CATHERINE AHL, DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND EDUCATION SPECIALIST, NATIONAL MILITARY FAMILY ASSOCIATION

Ms. AHL. Mr. Chairman, the NMFA represents, of course, military families. This includes spouses who may also be DODDS employees. Most importantly in a hearing about DODDS or anything concerned with DODDS, we represent the consumers, namely the children of military families stationed overseas.

Traditionally, military families consider education one of their highest priorities. They will choose to live far away from the military facility where the member works in a house sometimes they can barely afford just to ensure their children attend the best schools. When these same families go overseas, there aren't a lot of public schools to choose from. There is only one public school, namely DODDS.

I have to at this point agree with Dr. Stremple and highly endorse that, as military parents, we would like higher standards in the schools which educate our children. We have no problem with that whatsoever, and, as written in the bill, I am concerned about the recertification which would allow 6 hours in any subject. But it appears to me—I suppose one advantage of going last is you can sit and listen to what everybody else has said and sort of revise what you're going to say. It appears to me that both OEA and DODDS agree that the 6 hours with 3 being in the subject area would be the best way to go.

The main section of the bill that NMFA is opposed to, and a very large red flag went off when we originally read the bill, and that is the section 3(a) concerning teachers recruited overseas. The first section says that it would apply to local hires after 1 full year in a teaching position, and then the next section says the only exception would be a military spouse. I have to read this as saying the spouse of a Federal civilian employee would be able to, so to speak, double-dip and receive benefits already given to that family, but the spouse of an active duty military member who was ordered overseas would not be able to receive those benefits. We want to see it either one way or the other. Either cover everybody you have, everybody that is a teacher in the system regardless of where they're hired the same benefits, or don't give them to any spouse of an employee who is already receiving benefits.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. I think that's an excellent point. That can be corrected, I'm sure.

Ms. AHL. All right. And I think in some informal discussions before the hearing started I got that idea from others too, and so that would please us very much.

NMFA has traditionally worked in the past many times with OEA, with DODDS to ensure equitable treatment for DODDS teachers, many of whom are of course military spouses. We have a terrific NMFA representative in Wiesbaden, Germany, who is not only a military family member but is also a DODDS teacher. She recently initiated a letter writing campaign on the subject of inadequate health care services overseas, and, as a direct result of her actions and all of these many, many, many letters that came flowing in, DOD officials made a trip overseas to look into the problems of health care there.

In addition, NMFA has requested that DOD include all DODDS teachers in the count of beneficiaries which determines staffing requirements in military hospitals. We've also suggested some improvements be made in the FEHBP plans overseas, so this is something we're constantly working on.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Ahl follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STATEMENT OF CATHERINE AHL, DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AND EDUCATION SPECIALIST, NATIONAL MILITARY FAMILY ASSOCIATION

The National Military Family Association (NMFA) is a nonprofit, predominantly volunteer organization with membership from the seven uniformed services, active duty, retired, reserve component and their family members and survivors. NMFA is the only national organization whose sole focus is the military family and whose goal is to influence the development and implementation of policies which will improve the lives of those family members.

Mr. Chairman, NMFA appreciates the opportunity to express its views to this Subcommittee. We represent the consumers of the Department of Defense Dependents Schools (DODDS), namely the children of military families stationed overseas. These families consider the education of their children one of their highest priorities. Within the United States, military families often choose to live at a great distance from the job site and in a house they can barely afford just to ensure their children attend the best schools. When stationed overseas there is only one "public" school, DODDS. We must assure these families that the education their children receive is comparable to the best schools in the United States.

NMFA concurs with the provision of H.R. 3975 establishing a volunteer leave transfer program and a voluntary leave bank program for DoDDS teachers. All other federal employees are eligible for these programs. NMFA also concurs with Section 5, Continued Health Benefits, for the same reason.

NMFA is concerned about Section 4(b) of the Bill. It would allow teachers to be recertified by taking 6 semester-hours of graduate or undergraduate coursework in *any* subject area taught in DoDDS. In other words if I am certified to teach health and physical education (which I once was) and I take 6 hours of French, I will meet the requirement for recertification in health and physical education. How two classes in French would make me a better physical education teacher escapes me. DoDDS presently requires 6 semester-hours for recertification and requires that 3 semester-hours be in the current certified subject. It certainly is *not* unreasonable to expect teachers to keep current on the subject matter they teach. The policy is based on what is best educationally for the students—not what an individual teacher would like to take. The current recertification policy appears to be successful judging by the 1993 DoDDS Parent Report Card. The lack of teacher training in current education practice was identified as a problem by 11% of the parent respondents in the 1989 Report but dropped to 9% in 1991, and to 6% in 1993. If DoDDS is forced to allow teachers to take courses in any subject for recertification, NMFA predicts parents will again express dissatisfaction with their children's teachers. To legislate teacher certification rather than basing it on accepted and proven educational standards is to court disaster.

NMFA also has a few questions regarding Section 2 of this Bill. Does "full consideration" mean priority placement or preference? Would DoDDS teachers, involuntarily separated due to a reduction in force, be given the same preference as a veteran or military spouse? Section 6 Schools, those schools located on a military installation and funded and administered by the Department of Defense (DoD), would seem to be the primary "agency" which hires teachers. Have Section 6 schools been consulted or asked to comment on this proposal? In order to be eligible for transition benefits, separation pay or priority placement, a military member of federal civilian employee must have served a minimum number of years. There is no such requirement for DoDDS teachers in this section. NMFA recommends that all the groups involved with this issue be consulted and hold discussions to assure DoDDS teachers and other employees are afforded transition benefits equitable to those offered to other Federal employees.

The strongest objection NMFA has to this bill is Section 3(a) concerning teachers recruited overseas. Subsection (1)(d)(1) would provide full benefits of household goods relocation and housing allowances to local hires after one full year in a teaching position. The only exception would be a military spouse. A spouse of a federal civilian employee would be able to "double dip" and receive benefits already given to that family. The spouse of an active duty military member who was ordered overseas would be prohibited from receiving those same benefits. Mr. Chairman, this section is extremely offensive and blatantly discriminatory to military families.

NMFA would recommend that the words "a member of a uniformed service" be replaced by "any employee of the United States Government" in Subsection (2)(A). Then Section 3(a) would apply to spouses of any federal employee, civilian or military, who is separated from service and therefore no longer eligible for benefits. It would also apply to those teachers legally separated or divorced while overseas. An alternative would be to equally apply the increased benefits to military spouses.

Mr. Chairman, NMFA has worked in the past to ensure equitable treatment for DoDDS teachers, many of whom are military spouses. The NMFA Representative in Wiesbaden, Germany, is a DoDDS teacher and a military family member. She recently initiated a letter writing campaign on the subject of inadequate health care services overseas. Her actions resulted in DoD officials traveling to Europe to investigate the situation. Several positive changes have since occurred.

Mr. Chairman, NMFA fully supports many of the initiatives in H.R. 3975. However, the objection we have made in this testimony are of such importance to our members that we must oppose H.R. 3975 in its current form.

Ms. AHL. I would like, if you would allow me, to comment on your question about school boards.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Please do.

Ms. AHL. OK. Being a military spouse and having lived overseas several different times, I have been a substitute in the DODDS school. I have had two children who attended DODDS schools, and the last time we were overseas I was chairman of the School Advisory Committee or SAC. At times it worked well, but at other times the word advisory gets in there. It is not actually a school board that has any lasting input if the person in charge chooses not to receive that input or make the change that's requested.

There has been a concerted effort over the years to try and strengthen the school advisory committees and in some places it works wonderfully and in other places it doesn't work as well. But, the fact is that they're still advisory. They're not school boards as are mandated by local jurisdictions in the States.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Would you say that the problems come from the base commanders as well as the school administrators?

Ms. AHL. No. The base commanders really are not involved in the administration of the DODDS school system. The frustration comes sometimes—there is a system. The local SAC can request something of the principal. The principal has 2 weeks to reply to that request in writing. If the principal says no to whatever the suggestion is, then the next step is to write the district superintendent who then has 2 weeks to reply. If the district superintendent says no also, the next step is to write the regional superintendent who then I believe has 1 month to reply. And if the regional superintendent says no, then you can write directly to DODDS headquarters and they have a certain amount of time to reply. Unfortunately, by that time many of us have orders and are moving to the next duty station before we've ever gotten the final answer.

There is a system and I don't want to say it doesn't work, but there are certain restrictions because it's advisory. I have a great concern at this time, because it appears that the Department of Defense is trying to make the section 6 school boards advisory rather than having any real authority, and this is going to put them in the same situation. If a superintendent or a principal chooses to take the advice, then everything is fine. If they choose not to take the advice, a lot of problems can occur as a result.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Do you think there is a structural or administrative vehicle to correct this, given the particular function of DODDS schools? Can these boards be more than advisory and in essence their input be respected more without sacrificing uniformity or rights within the system? There could be designated areas where you really have significant power, wouldn't you say?

Ms. AHL. You know, I think so much of it depends on the relationship between the local administration and the parents there, and I think in many cases perhaps more leeway needs to be given to the local schools to initiate certain programs that don't cost money, that are innovative, and I think that's being done in many cases. I must say that my experience was 5 years ago or 6 years ago and I have seen much improvement since then, but I know that we still as an association receive comments from our members that there is still some frustration.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Unlike schools elsewhere.

Ms. AHL. OK. Right.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. I'm just being facetious.

Ms. AHL. No, I realize that, but I think when the two communities, the families and the schools, including the administration, teachers, work together, it works well. And I think we're getting more to that point. We are hearing less complaints about it.

And I don't think there's a solution that you can make the school board overseas have absolute authority, because that board would not have the authority to raise taxes or fund the school.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. A fairly unique situation.

If you don't mind, I might ask Mr. Stremple if there's anything pending on communications, school board type improvements.

Dr. STREMPLE. Well, we have—there is no plan to establish formal school boards in the DODDS school system. And I understand what Ms. Ahl is talking about because my wife has been working with school boards. We don't have a similar—and it's such an amorphous thing. I don't know exactly how you'd put it together with shifting populations and commands and this kind of thing, the student bodies turning over and so on.

Perhaps something could be done in that area. It's just that it isn't an area where I focus because we had other fish to fry, I though, in terms of curriculum matters and this kind of thing. We did strengthen advisory committee processes in the last few years since I've been here, requiring that the regional superintendents and the district superintendents right down to the school level have strong advisory committees.

The Congress, when they established the overseas school system, did direct that there be an advisory committee from the United States composed of educators and people within the school system and military people and so on, people from the teachers association. They only meet three times a year, but we treat them not dissimilar to the way you treat a school board. When they give us direction, we follow through assiduously and report back to them and have put into practice many of their ideas and it's not taken lightly, but they are not in the position to mandate.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Well, what would be the impact of local parents on a curriculum decision as to what's going to be offered?

Dr. STREMPLE. Well, we encourage that and want it, and to a large extent it does go on. We require that curriculum be a major part of the school improvement program. We have the school improvement practice where every school has to come up with and design programs to improve their school on a yearly basis and the parents are supposed to be involved. As Catherine Ahl indicates, you have degrees of practice that are better in some cases and others, and so on, but it's one that from here we drive it. We drive it and insist on it and check it.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. There is really qualitative parent-teacher input?

Dr. STREMPLE. Yes, there is. In addition to that, we do a survey every other year of our parents and we take the curriculum areas and all areas and ask for their feedback and use that. We use it. We check it school by school and where we see problems we go after it, so there is that kind of process.

Is it perfect? I'm not going to say it is. No. You've got the same kind of communication thing you have in any school system and so on, but we don't have, as Ms. Ahl said, we don't have the school board that's hiring the local superintendent, which makes a big difference, you know, in the reporting processes and so on. No, that isn't in effect. Could it be? Well, possibly. I'm not in a position to talk policy-wise about that.

Mr. McCLOSKEY. Well, thank you, Mr. Stremple.

Ms. Ahl, you have anything else?

Ms. AHL. No, sir. I think I've had my say. I hope that some of the concerns that each of the groups have about what is in the bill can be worked out to the satisfaction of everyone, and I hope that all the groups involved will sit down and discuss these issues and come to some sort of resolution, again remembering what this is all about. It's the children that we're educating. That's the bottom line.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Do you, as a parent and a teacher and a military wife think the transfer policy is a big item and that we need some work there?

Ms. AHL. I can't really speak to that, not having been around a DODDS school in several years. We were stationed in the Philippines and it always seemed to be an issue there. There were teachers that were trying to get out of the Philippines and couldn't seem to do it, but I really cannot address that. I know it was a problem at that time and I'm sure there are people in areas that are not as good as others and, frankly, the gentleman from Korea, if we're only assigning military there for 1-year unaccompanied and 2-year accompanied tours, we really ought to make an attempt to do the same thing for our teachers. We don't want demoralized teachers teaching our children.

Mr. MCCLOSKEY. Thank you, Ms. Ahl. It was very helpful.

I thank everyone, and the hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:02 p.m., the above-entitled matter was adjourned.]

[Additional material submitted for the record follows:]

NATIONAL MILITARY FAMILY ASSOCIATION,
Alexandria, VA, April 5, 1994.

Hon. FRANK MCCLOSKEY,
*Chairman, Subcommittee on Civil Service, Post Office and Civil Service Committee,
Cannon House Office Building, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSMAN MCCLOSKEY: The National Military Family Association (NMFA) appreciated the opportunity to testify before your Subcommittee on H.R. 3975. As stated, our two objections to the Bill were the recertification section and the discrimination against military spouses in Section 3. All parties at the hearing seemed willing to compromise on these two issues, and we are hopeful they will be removed or changed before the Bill moves forward.

You requested more information concerning the attempt to make Section 6 School Boards advisory. Prior to 1978 military commanders ran schools at their installations. Congress decided this gave one individual too much control and created a system of checks and balances. Section 6 schools were authorized to be operated like all other schools in the country through elected school boards. These boards were "empowered to oversee expenditures and operations." Military families have expressed satisfaction with this system. Section 6 schools give them the opportunity to have legitimate authority over the education of their children.

In December 1992 the Director of Section 6 schools announced through a memorandum to Superintendents that the boards were only advisory and had no real authority. Military parents contacted their Congressmen about this change, and House Report 102-200 noted "with concern the issuance of recent DoD directives altering the oversight role of Section 6 school boards established by statute." In addition, the Conference Report on H.R. 2401 (the 1994 Defense Authorization Bill) adopted the House language and directed the GAO to "include the role of local school boards in its review of Section 6 schools." When NMFA contacted GAO regarding the study, GAO stated they had no plans to visit Section 6 schools or interview board members or parents. Instead, the information has been gathered from discussions with the Director of Section 6 Schools.

NMFA has received calls from school board members and parents concerned that curriculum changes are being made without the board being consulted, budgets are not being shared with the boards, and parent input at board meetings is not being allowed. NMFA's goal is to ensure quality education for military children. We believe this is best accomplished through elected school boards with legal authority

to oversee that education. Without a change in the law, NMFA does not believe the authority of 16 boards can be taken away and put in the hands of one person in Washington.

Thank you for your interest in our children's education.

Sincerely,

CATHERINE AHL,
Director, Government Relations.



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